Meralco poised to increase power rates by 116%

STORY ON PAGE A2

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Cebu journalists fined for contempt**
  ACROSS / A14
- **Suicide bombing kills 4, jolts Mideast peace talks**
  WORLD /A10
- **On to Peru for Bush**
  WORLD/A11

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Int'l peace mission probes Basilan war

Team 'worried' about American military presence

By Donna S. Cueto

A 14-MEMBER international peace mission will start today a four-day investigation of the "real situation" in Basilan, Zamboanga and Central Mindanao in light of the US military presence.

The mission—which includes human rights activists, politicians, parliamentarians and academicians—is worried that what happened in Afghanistan, where many civilians were killed as a result of the US-led campaign against terrorism, might happen in the Philippines.

The "war in Basilan" is a "critical international issue," the mission pointed out in a statement.

"First, because the rights and welfare of all victims of war are the concern of all," it said. "Second, because Basilan is the prototype of impending US operations in its 'global war against terror' and therefore warrants careful scrutiny by the international community."

The mission members were "extremely worried about the deployment of US troops in Mindanao," according to Walden Bello, a professor of the University of the Philippines.

"It is now clear that this is merely the first step in the creation of a second front in the so-called war against terrorism," he said. "There is one dreaded word for this: escalation."

The mission will undertake a visit to the RP-US Balikatan 02-1 training camp, dialogues with affected groups and residents,

INT'L/A16

ERIK ARAZAS

BOWING TO A HIGHER FORCE
The police force at the Western Police District holds its annual "Pabasa," the reading of the passion and death of Jesus Christ in observance of the Holy Week which starts tomorrow, Palm Sunday.

PCA meeting with Erap group bared

By Norman Bordadora

A TOP official of the Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa) yesterday said the Philippine Consultative Assembly (PCA) met with leaders of Joseph Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino early this month to discuss plans for constitutional change and a federal form of government.

But the PCA's Linda Montayre promptly denied this, and denounced the Copa's Pastor "Boy" Saycon for "insinuating" that her group had been conniving with the Estrada camp to destabilize the government by planting bombs in various parts of Metro Manila.

Montayre, secretary general of the PCA who at one point called for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said that while her group had been pushing for a federal or parliamentary government, it would not resort to terrorist activities such as bomb threats to bring about such a change.

"The PCA and its allies do not have the capability to (conduct) such destabilization attempts," she told the INQUIRER. "In fact, it could be the government that is behind all these, so (it can) either declare martial law or suspend the (privilege of the) writ of *habeas corpus*."

Montayre said, "Boy Saycon is just too malicious." She added: "Why do people listen to him (as if he were still part of civil society)? He is now a member of the government because he is a member of the Insurance Commission."

But Saycon, secretary general of Copa, denied he was charging anybody with destabilization when he told radio station dzBB that the PCA met with leaders of Estrada's party at Club Filipino in

PCA/A16

Texting averts gov't-Moro skirmishes

By Anthony S. Allada
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and TJ Burgonio
in Manila

DAVAO CITY—Government and rebel negotiators may have found one contemporary way to beat the sword of war into the proverbial plowshare: the use of cellular phones. According to a military official, the exchange of cell phone numbers between members of the government peace panel and their Moro Islamic Liberation Front counterparts last March 12 has aborted "six or seven" potential skirmishes between government troops and MILF rebels.

Col. Romeo Calizo, chair of the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities of the government peace panel, said frequent mobile phone contacts with his MILF counterpart, Commander Taps Julhani, have helped prevent the clashes. The swapping of numbers happened during a break in a meeting between the two parties at the Estosan Hotel in Cotabato City. Calizo said the MILF had ex-

TEXTING/A16

Global lotto for peace proposed

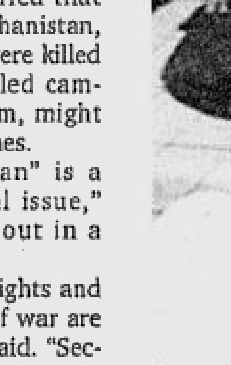
MONTERREY, Mexico—Finland called on world leaders here Thursday to consider creating a global lottery to finance the war on poverty.

"We need imagination, freshmindedness and creativity to find new sources of financing to supplement official development assistance," Finnish President Tarja Hallonen said at a UN development summit. "One possibility might be the idea of a global lottery which is now being examined in Finland," she said.

The Finnish president said leaders gathering here had agreed two years ago at the United Nations Millennium Summit to do everything possible to eradicate misery and

GLOBAL/A16

Rags to riches to rags again


SO EASY TO BE A MILLIONAIRE

BANGKOK—It was a case of rags to riches and back to rags again for a Thai street hawker who briefly became a millionaire when a computer glitch on a popular TV game show fed her the answers intended for the host.

Lertrak Panjanawaporn, 44, stunned the producers of the popular "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" show by

RAGS/A15

Palace favors 'secret marshals' vs bombers

By Carlito Pablo
and PDI Mindanao Bureau

MALACAÑANG is supporting the fielding of "secret marshals" following the discovery in Metro Manila and in two cities in Mindanao of bomb devices, although these were found to be duds.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the deployment of policemen in civilian clothes "is within the prerogative" of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

The PNP's National Capital Region Command had earlier said that it was fielding about 500 secret marshals. But it later said that these were "detective foot patrols" because of fears associated with their dreaded predecessors.

Secret marshals were first fielded during the Marcos regime and were associated with extra-judicial killings.

Since Monday, 11 bombs have been found in Metro Manila and in the cities of Cotabato and General Santos in Mindanao. The bomb scare has reached Davao City. A box, which looked like an improvised bomb, was found outside the Victoria Plaza shopping mall on Thursday night. It was also a dud. ***(See story on Page A15.)***

A group calling itself the Indigenous People's Federal Army claimed responsibil-

PALACE/A15

Nude photo session lands Koreans in jail

By Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Were they students in a fine arts class, or models and photographers for a calendar? Nine South Korean tourists, including two women, were taken into custody on Thursday after the police received complaints that the party was conducting a nude photo shoot inside historic Fort San Pedro.

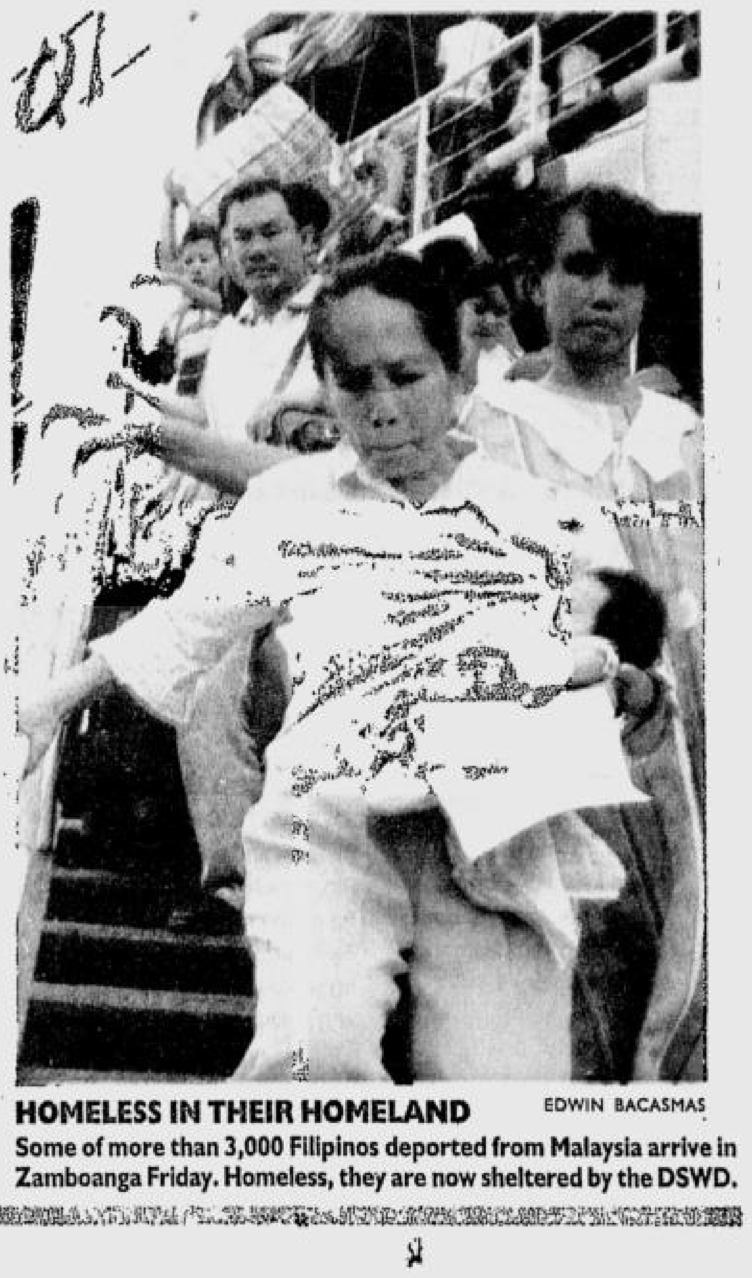
The police filed criminal charges against the two young women—Su Young-sun, 21 and Yoo Sun-ha, 26—but the Cebu City Prosecutor's Office dismissed the complaint shortly before 5 p.m. yesterday for lack of probable cause.

Chief Insp. Glen Ares said the nine were held on Thursday evening after security guards reported that they were taking nude photos. The tourists, who arrived in the country on March 19, had no permits for a photo shoot inside the popular public park, but they insisted that the women had not been naked but were wearing flesh-colored tights. The photographs were intended for use in a calendar, Ares said. An earlier report, however, said the Koreans initially claimed they were fine arts students.

The men were released on Thursday, but two of them decided to remain in jail to keep the women company.

The tourists were conducting their photo shoot near the staircase leading to the second level of the fort.

NUDE/A15


EDWIN BACASMAS

HOMELESS IN THEIR HOMELAND
Some of more than 3,000 Filipinos deported from Malaysia arrive in Zamboanga Friday. Homeless, they are now sheltered by the DSWD.

Second FRONT PAGE

SOBRA
NAMAN
KAYO! GR

Meralco set to hike power rates

Bayan says planned increase will be as much as P3.97 per kwh

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

AS IF EVER rising prices of goods were not enough, the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) is set to jack up power rates by as much as 116 percent for residential consumers.

This was bared by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) at a press briefing yesterday on Meralco's plan to increase its basic charge by as much as P3.97 per kilowatt-hour.

For a typical family consuming 114 kwh a month, this would translate to an increase of as high as 116 percent in their electric bill.

"Meralco has been candid enough to admit that the rate hike is meant to increase its profits and raise its Return on Rate Base (RORB) from 3.8 percent to 8 percent. Profit is the plain and shameless motive for the increase," said Bayan spokesperson Renato M. Reyes Jr.

"At a time when consumers are reeling from the high cost of living, the power rate hike is a heartless imposition by corporate vultures like Meralco," Reyes added.

Under the new rate scheme, Meralco reportedly stands to earn as much as P16 billion in profits. In 1999, Meralco made P3.31 billion, and in 2000 P2.49 billion.

Meralco is the biggest power distributor in the country, servicing 17 towns and cities in Metro Manila, as well key localities in Bulacan, Cavite, Rizal, Batangas, Quezon, Laguna and Pampanga.

Some 18 million consumers would be affected by the rate increase.

Reyes said the proposed rate hike proves that President Macapagal-Arroyo's promise of lower electric rates was a sham.

The Energy Industry Reform Act (EIRA), which is the legal basis for the proposed increase, was the first major bill to be ratified in the Macapagal administration. During deliberations on the bill in Congress, the President hailed it as the solution to high power rates.

The EIRA requires firms like Meralco to "unbundle" their basic electricity charge. This means breaking down the basic charge into its component parts—the generation charge, distribution charge, metering charge and supply charge.

This was required under the law to ensure transparency and let consumers know what they were paying for.

But Bayan charged that Meralco attempted a "sleight of hand" when it inserted a power rate increase into its "unbundled" rates.

According to Bayan, the "sleight of hand" was also intended to conceal controversial components of electric bills like the Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) and the Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment (Cera).

In its proposed unbundled rates, Meralco included the PPA and Cera in its computation of the basic charge, thus hiking electric rates even further.

"Meralco is trying to hit two birds with one stone. It wants to adjust its rates even before the people actually get to see the unbundled rates," Reyes said.

"The PPA is controversial because it accounts for nearly two-thirds of our electric bill. The reason for charging the PPA is not yet clear and this has caused furor among consumers," he said.

Bayan called the new power rate scheme "highway robbery, plain and simple."

It said the power rate adjustment was unmatched in recent years and would be the biggest single increase to be implemented by Meralco.

Apart from the rate increase, other charges loom as part of the privatization of the National Power Corp.

Under the EIRA, the government will pay the stranded debt of Napocor once it is fully privatized.

"The public will be screwed twice over. First, by an exorbitant rate hike and then with higher taxes to pay for the debts of Napocor," Reyes said.

Bayan has called on the Energy Regulatory Commission to block any attempt by Meralco to raise its rates. The militant group is also pushing for a congressional inquiry into the PPA and the ERC.

"President Macapagal must be held accountable because it was she who pushed for the enactment of the EIRA. It was she who promised lower power rates. She has no choice but to answer this issue squarely," Reyes said.

Sandigan allows Ongkiko, Jimenez to be dropped from Erap defense team

By Volt Contreras

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday dropped Mario Ongkiko and Rodolfo Jimenez from Joseph Estrada's court-appointed defense team, granting their pleading to be removed from the historic trial in which the disgraced ex-President has refused to take part.

But the anti-graft court retained all the other de officio lawyers who also wanted out, saying it was still "convinced that they are the best" counsels who can represent Estrada "despite the limitations."

Faced with the common move by Estrada's nine de officio lawyers to quit, the court stressed its obligation to appoint counsels who would protect the "rights and interests" of an accused.

It thus denied the prayer by the reluctant lawyers to have Estrada's original de parte (chosen) counsels re-engaged by court order, but this time on de officio status.

Associate Justice Minita Nazario, chair of the special Sandiganbayan division, said it "will not be propitious and auspicious" to bring back the old Estrada defense team, whom the ex-President dismissed Feb. 27.

The Estrada trial will proceed as scheduled on April 12 as none of the retained de officio counsels present in court yesterday asked for postponement despite these developments.

At least this April and May, the trial will still be held twice a week—Monday and Wednesday mornings—but an hour longer than the usual 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. schedule.

This would be the court's way of complying with President Macapagal-Arroyo's recently issued Administrative Order No. 32, giving government employees the option not to report for work either on Mondays or Fridays.

It remains a big question how Estrada's new defense counsels will deal with his refusal to cooperate with any court-appointed lawyer, and with his open contempt of the court.

In an oral ruling, Nazario, recalled the March 6 appointment of Ongkiko and Jimenez as Estrada's counsels de officio.

But the court found "no serious and sufficient reason" to approve the reiterated motion for withdrawal filed by the four lawyers from the Public Attorneys Office.

It also rejected on the same grounds a similar pleading jointly made by private lawyers Manuel Pamaran, Prospero Crescini and Irene Jurado, who last Wednesday adopted Ongkiko's March 15 motion to withdraw.

The court thus named one replacement counsel, Pasig City-based private lawyer Noel Malaya.

Off-court, PAO chief Persida Acosta told reporters she was tapping four more lawyers from her agency—Wilfredo Andres, Francisco Sanchez, Oscar Co and Maximo Usita Jr.—mainly for Estrada's co-accused son Jinggoy.

The first four PAO lawyers appointed for the elder Estrada by the court were Arturo Temanil, Joefferson Toribio, Silvestre Mosing and Melita Lauron.

THE PAIN SOCIETY HOLDS CONVENTION IN CEBU

The Pain Society of the Philippines (PSP) will hold its 10th Annual Convention this March 25-26, 2002 at Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort, Mactan, Cebu. This is a multidisciplinary medical society under the International Association for the Study of Pain.

PSP president Francis O. Javier, MD announced that a basic science refresher course II would also be held on March 24, 2002 as a prelude to the convention. This will be chaired by Prof Benigno M. Sulit Jr. It is open to all for a minimal fee.

The convention theme is "Pain: Rated X (eXtremes of age; eXtremely painful conditions). Keynote Speaker is Lapu-Lapu City Mayor Arturo O. Radaza.

Various topics in pain will be tackled by local and foreign speakers. Foreign Speakers who will be talking for the convention are Prof Bianchi (Italy), Prof Grond (Germany) and Dr David Scott (Australia).

A fellowship night will be held at the Alegardo Island, Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort, Mactan, Cebu with the theme, "1521, Cebu"

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Shun South, Brits told

By Christine Herrera

THE BRITISH Embassy yesterday warned its nationals to stay away from parts of Mindanao and Palawan and to be doubly alert if they wanted to travel to other parts of the Philippines.

"We strongly advise against all travel to southern and western Mindanao and against all holiday and other non-essential travel to other parts of Mindanao and Palawan until further notice," an advisory from the embassy said.

"British nationals should remain vigilant throughout the Philippines, including being aware of the threat of kidnapping in Metro Manila, and exercise caution when considering travel to any coastal resorts," the advisory said.

It was also warned British nationals to guard against dengue fever, malaria and rabies.

The embassy advised against travel to the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat, North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi and Zamboanga City, where there has been a prolonged Muslim insurgency.

It warned Britons of the threat of bombings, citing as an example an explosive device defused in Makati City near the British Embassy on Dec. 21, 2001.

Abus on the run from RP-US forces, says GMA

ABU Sayyaf guerrillas are on the run seven weeks into a joint US-Philippines campaign against global terrorism, President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday as she sought popular backing for an expanded US involvement.

She told the Philippine Army on the 105th anniversary of its founding that the country could "look forward with confidence" to when the kidnap gang would be stamped out from the island province of Basilan.

"We will put an end to these terrorists soon with the assistance of our allies."

The military campaign, in which 660 US troops are serving as advisers and conducting electronic surveillance, "is beginning to bear fruit," Ms Macapagal said.

"Our troops are hot on the trail of the terrorists, aided by sophisticated intelligence gathering" provided by US military aircraft and other means.

Ms Macapagal said the campaign was now "running in the middle of its course" and would be pursued "with greater vigor and force until terrorism is destroyed and can no longer rise from the ashes."

Both allies say the gunmen, who are holding two US Christian missionaries hostage, have links to the al-Qaida network of Osama bin Laden, the main suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

Clashes between the guerrillas and Filipino troops have stepped up over the past few weeks amid heightened aerial surveillance by US military aircraft over Basilan.

Arroyo praised residents of the impoverished southern island for standing up to the rebels by backing the joint operations. The people can "look forward with confidence to the day when this scourge is finally stamped out," she added.

She also pushed for expanded US military involvement in the campaign against terrorism in the southern Philippines.

"We cannot be half-hearted," she said. "Strategic decisiveness is important."

Arroyo said her government has "no opposition" to a proposal to expand the US military involvement in the south to providing a "community development" aspect by building roads and other infrastructure in Basilan.

Filipino officials said a proposal to send about 300 US military engineers to the island was on the table.

Arroyo said this would help residents "recover from the destruction and stagnation wrought on them" by the Abu Sayyaf.

The President also called for a review of the emphasis of the two allies' annual joint military exercises. They should prioritize the "skills needed in the international fight against terrorism," she said. *AFP*

RP using old law to hold 'terrorists'

THE PHILIPPINES is using an old but powerful immigration law to keep suspected foreign terrorists in jail indefinitely in the absence of anti-terrorism legislation, officials say.

At least 11 foreign suspects are languishing in prison for breaking immigration laws even though they were primarily charged with the more serious offense of possession of explosives.

Officials said the 60-year-old Philippine Immigration Act had proved useful following the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

Since then, the authorities have arrested four Middle Eastern nationals, four Indonesians, two Vietnamese and one Japanese.

Some of them are believed to be linked to the al-Qaida network of Saudi militant Osama bin Laden.

Under the law, Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo has blanket powers to detain a foreigner believed to have violated conditions of entry into the country.

The Philippines does not have a powerful law like the Internal Security Act (ISA) of neighboring Malaysia and Singapore, which allows indefinite detention without trial.

"While the ISA can cover both locals and foreigners, the Philippine AFP." *AFP*

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DFA to cut passport fees abroad; Senate sets probe

By Christine Herrera and Rocky Nazareno

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs will slash passport fees at its embassies and consulates abroad by $10—from $60 to $50—beginning next month.

DFA spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros said this was being done on orders of President Macapagal-Arroyo to "ease the burden on some 3.9 million Filipino workers abroad."

Ironically, on the home front, the DFA is set to increase passport fees from P650 to a still undetermined amount once the Machine Readable Passports and Visas (MRPV) system goes into operation this year.

Lecaros said the DFA has already prepared the Administrative Order mandating the $10 reduction in passport fees abroad. The AO is to be signed by Vice President and DFA Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. next week on his return from Mexico where he is attending the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development.

At the Senate, the foreign relations committee is set to investigate the shortage of passports at the DFA, despite the huge funds generated by passport fees.

Sen. Blas Ople, committee chair, said yesterday that under the Passport Law, all fees related to passport processing should go to the DFA.

As such, Ople said, the committee did not find plausible the DFA's explanation that the shortage was caused by an increase in the number of Filipinos leaving for abroad to work.

"Are they implying there is a mass exodus of Filipinos, hence the historic rise in new passport applications?" Ople asked.

Ople said "shortsightedness and infighting among DFA officials could have led to the passport mess."

He cited news reports that referred to disagreements within the DFA on the awarding of the P2-billion computerization project.

"The DFA has come up with a gamut of excuses for the shortage. It's official explanations vary from day to day," Ople said.

He said the Senate probe intends to "unravel the mystery behind this unprecedented shortage of passports which is now a major embarrassment to all Filipinos."

Ople said OFWs on their first stints abroad could find their job contracts jeopardized because the DFA might be unable to issue them passports. Roughly 25 percent of departing OFWs are leaving the country for the first time.

Officials of OFW group Migrante International earlier rejected the DFA's excuse that the unusual surge in the number of OFWs was the cause of the passport shortfall.

The cut in passport fees was ordered by Ms Macapagal during a recent Cabinet meeting, following a promise she made to OFWs in Hong Kong in October last year, Lecaros said.

Lecaros denied the reduction was a ploy by the President to woo the OFW vote in 2004 should the absentee voting bill be passed by Congress.

The $10 reduction will translate into losses of some $30,000 a day or P30 million a month for Philippine embassies abroad.

At least 3,000 passports are allocated daily for some 80 embassies and consulates abroad. Six thousand passports is the daily quota for distribution nationwide.

Asked how the DFA would make up the $30,000 per day loss, Lecaros said the department would have to source revenues elsewhere, like in increased visa fees. Foreigners are charged $30 for a visa to enter the Philippines.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, March 23, 2002
5th Week of Lent

1st Reading: **Ezk 37:21-28**
Gospel: **Jn 11:45-57**

Many of the Jews who had come with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw what he did; but some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees called the Sanhedrin Council.

They said, "What are we to do? For this man keeps on giving miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, all the people will believe in him and, as a result of this, the Romans will come and sweep away our Holy Place and our nation."

Then one of them, Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all nor do you see clearly what you need. It is better to have one man die for the people than to let the whole nation be destroyed."

In saying this Caiaphas did not speak for himself, but being High Priest that year, he foretold as a prophet that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the scattered children of God. So, from that day on, they were determined to kill him.

Because of this, Jesus no longer moved about freely among the Jews. He withdrew instead to the country near the wilderness and stayed with his disciples in a town called Ephraim.

The Passover of the Jews was at hand and people from everywhere were coming to Jerusalem to purify themselves before the Passover. They looked for Jesus and as they stood in the Temple, they talked with one another, "What do you think? Will he come to the festival?" Meanwhile the chief priests and the elders had given orders that anyone who knew where he was should let them know so that they could arrest him.

Commentary

With the words of Caiaphas the dice is cast: Jesus if he comes up to Jerusalem for the festival is a dead man. Caiaphas has something to defend—"our Holy Place and our nation"—which mean more to him than searching for truth or justice. Anything valued thus is an idol; it has taken the place of God, the very crime imputed to Jesus. Let us not judge Caiaphas too harshly. It would be wiser to hope for God's mercy for him as we do for ourselves. According to his own way of thinking, he meant well. He reasoned that this had to be done "for the people." Today, people all over the world are dying "for the people" because of our idolatrous economic system which values profit more than persons. Generations to come may see our sinfulness more clearly, just as we now see that of Caiaphas.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Guidelines in the appreciation of circumstantial evidence—Wharton suggests four basic guidelines in the appreciation of circumstantial evidence, (1) it should be acted upon with caution; (2) all the essential facts must be consistent with the hypothesis of guilt; (3) the facts must exclude every other theory but that of guilt; and (4) the facts must establish such a certainty of guilt of the accused as to convince the judgment beyond reasonable doubt that the accused is the one who committed the offense. The peculiarity of circumstantial evidence is that the guilt of the accused cannot be deduced from scrutinizing just one particular piece of evidence. It is far more like puzzle which when put together reveals a convincing picture pointing towards the conclusion that the accused is the author of the crime. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, People v. Parba, G.R. No. 133886, September 5, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

SNAP SHOTS

COMMANDER in Chief, President Macapagal is the honoree at the 105th anniversary of the Philippine Army at Fort Bonifacio.

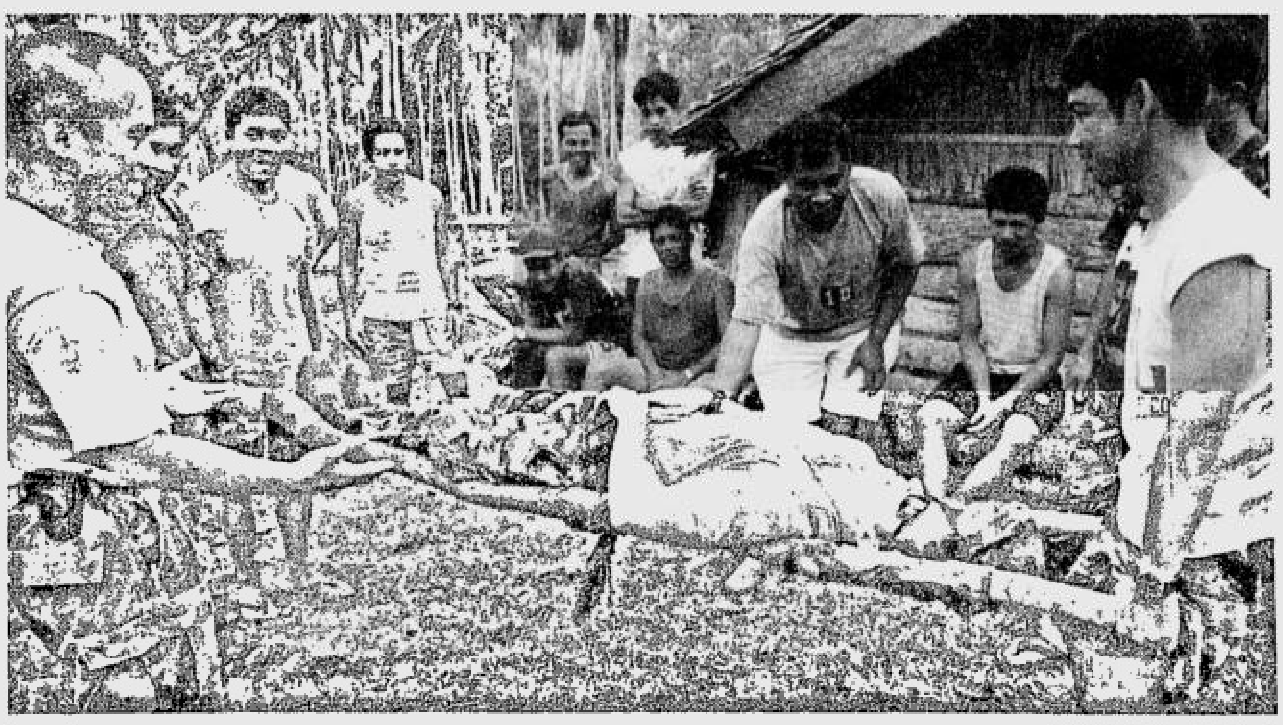
VAL HANDUMON

DRAMATIC tableau of the poor suffering Filipino is staged by the urban poor at Mendiola on Friday in the run up to the Holy Week.

ERIK ARAZAS

THE ARMY'S commanding general Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos leads the President in inspecting the troops.

VAL HANDUMON



LEARNING by showing: A member of the US Army Special Forces demonstrates to the Filipino soldiers how to handle, give first aid and evacuate an injured person during a paramedic class in Barangay Mataring, Lantawan, Basilan.

EDWIN BACASMAS

2 Army officers honored for Edsa II, Edsa III

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday decorated two Army officers who played important roles in Edsa II and in crushing the May 1, 2001 siege on Malacañang by supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Ms Macapagal conferred the Philippine Legion of Honor Award on Maj. Gen. Alfonso Dagudag, who, as deputy chief of staff for operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, "vigorously carried out orders" of then AFP chief Gen. Angelo Reyes "to ensure maximum control of all AFP units" during the People Power II uprising.

The President awarded a Bronze Cross to Capt. Renerio Batalla, who, as a responsible officer in Joint Task Group "Palace Shield" and Joint Task Force Libra, "helped plan and execute the dispersal operations" against Estrada supporters who attacked the Palace last year.

Dagudag and Batalla were among the 12 awardees who were honored by Ms Macapagal during the celebration of the 105th anniversary of the Army held in Fort Bonifacio, Makati.

The awardees included Brig. Gen. Alberto Braganza, former senior military aide-de-camp and military adviser of President Macapagal from March to December 2001.

In her speech, President Macapagal said the awardees "are this year's models of the great Filipino soldier, models of the best traditions of the Army."

The other awardees were:

- Brig. Gen. Samuel Bagasin. He received the Distinguished Conduct Star for "courage and gallantry" as commander of the 402nd Brigade, which liberated a barangay in Lanao del Norte from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in April 2000.
- M/Sgt. Alfredo Garcia. Distinguished Conduct Star for courage and gallantry during an encounter with MILF forces in North Cotabato in July 1997.
- 2Lt. Romulus Rabara. Gold Cross Medal. For courage and gallantry during an offensive operation against the MILF in Maguindanao in July 2000.
- Cpl. Adonis Bactad. Gold Cross Medal. For gallantry in action during the defense of a barangay in Compostela Valley from an attack by "dissident terrorists" in December 2000.
- Lt. Col. Gregorio Catapang. Distinguished Service Star. For his service as commander of the 28th Infantry Battalion in Lanao del Sur.
- Maj. Johnny Macanas. Outstanding Achievement Medal. For extraordinary services as assistant chief of staff for civil military operations and spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division.
- Marcial Dangcalan. A member of the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Unit in Camarines Sur. Kagitingan sa Barangay Award. For gallantry during an encounter against communist rebels in December 2000.
- M/Sgt. Domingo Deles. Enlisted Personnel of the Year. For his outstanding achievements as member of the Army's Intelligence and Security Group.
- Julie Ann Peñalosa Ramos as representative of the Edsa Shrine Community. NGO (nongovernment organization) of the Year Award. For contribution to medical missions in Lamitan, Basilan.

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17 more food products tested positive for GMOs

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

SEVENTEEN more locally sold food products, including popular children's snacks and meat products, have been tested and found to contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs), the environmentalist group Greenpeace revealed yesterday.

Beau Baconguis, Greenpeace Southeast Asia engineering campaigner, said the 17 were among 36 products shipped by his organization to Hong Kong DNA Chips Ltd., an independent testing laboratory in Hong Kong, for testing for GMOs.

Baconguis said of the 36 products, 17 or 47.12 percent were found positive for various genetically modified DNA sequences.

The products were identified as Granny Goose Tortillos Chili Flavor, Granny Goose Kornets Barbecue Flavor, Bocaditos Tortilla Chips Shashlik Flavor, Prime Corn Starch, Food Fair Quality Corn Starch, Magnolia Chicken Chunks in Brine, Holiday Corned Beef, Purefoods Gusto Sausage, Purefoods Liver Spread, Campo Carne Chicken Vienna Sausage, Campo Carne Chinese Luncheon Meat, Butterfinger, Argentina Corned Beef, Argentina Beef Loaf, CDO Karne Norte Pinoy Style Guisado, Quality Foods Big N' Tastee Hotdog, and Pokka Soya Bean Drink.

Baconguis said the latest findings brought to 46 the number of identified GMO-contaminated products produced locally or sold in the country. The manufacturers of the earlier found products, including Gerber's Baby Food and Novartis, had pledged to stop sending GMO-tainted products to the Philippines.

On Feb. 3, Greenpeace activists blocked a ship carrying 17,000 tons of genetically engineered (GE) soybeans from the United States bound for the General Milling Corp.

"The Filipino public will continue to consume risky genetically engineered food with neither their knowledge nor consent if government does not act swiftly and decisively to label them," Baconguis said in a news conference.

Baconguis said government's inaction on mandatory labeling requirements has allowed corporations to "take on the role of mad scientists playing with Filipino consumers as their experimental rats."

'Spent force' tag on Erap disputed

By Juliet L. Javellana

SPENT force? Not Joseph Estrada, contrary to what the business community might think.

This was the reaction of Rep. Willie Villarama (Bulacan) and Rep. Benasing Macarambon (Lanao del Sur) to economic analyst Peter Wallace's assessment at a Malacañang forum Thursday that the former President was a "spent force."

"I don't know where he (Wallace) based that assessment," Villarama said. "As a politician, I have learned not to take any political figure for granted."

Villarama, who served as President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff when she was Vice President, said there have been a number of political figures less popular than Estrada who disappeared from the public eye for years but managed to come back even stronger.

"Spent force? That's not true, we can very well see that Erap has many supporters," Macarambon said.

Macarambon said some sectors had also dismissed Nur Misuari as a spent force but when his supporters attacked, "the soldiers were nearly wiped out."

"You cannot just ignore someone with a grievance," Macarambon added. Misuari's forces attacked military outposts in Jolo, Sulu, in November and the pocket rebellion, though quelled, resulted in the loss of many lives.

Wallace, an economic consultant and longtime Philippine resident, told some 200 top business executives who attended the Wallace Business Forum: "We believe Estrada is a spent force. But he must be tried and judgment rendered before any accommodations can be made, including any trip to the United States."

Sin declares Palm Sunday Caritas Sunday

MARCH 24. Palm Sunday is Caritas Sunday. Parishioners are urged to support the programs and services of Caritas, the Social Services and Development Ministry of the Archdiocese of Manila, by sharing their time, talent and treasure with the poor.

In his Pastoral letter to be read in all Masses during Caritas Sunday, Archbishop of Manila and Caritas Chair Jaime Cardinal Sin urges everyone to "give generously to the poor. Whatever you saved during fasting, donate it to Caritas. Whatever you give should be something of yourself, not only of your excess, but of your substance." Christians are also encouraged to live beyond the comforts of their homes and join the 3,000 Caritas volunteers who assist in the delivery of much needed social services for the urban poor.

All Mass collections during Caritas Sunday will be used for the various programs and services for the urban poor implemented by the Caritas-Ecclesiastical District Social Services and Development Ministries and Caritas Special Programs: Bukid Kabataan, residential center for abandoned, abused and exploited children; Prison Justice and Development Program and AIDS Prevention Program.

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ERRATUM

IN the "sanofi~synthelabo" supplement which appeared in the March 21 issue of the Inquirer, the name of Patrick Gerard L. Moral, M.D. of the Philippine Society of Sleep Medicine (PSSM) was assigned an incorrect designation and the name of Rolando C. dela Eva, M.D. was not included. The name of Rolando dela Eva in the caption of St. Luke's Comprehensive Sleep Disorders Center (SLCSDC) photograph was misspelled. We are again publishing the names of the members of PSSM, including the photograph and caption of SLCSDC members.

Philippine Society of Sleep Medicine members: Ma. Felicidad A. Soto, M.D., president, Merci Antoinette S. Gappi, M.D., vice president, Rolando C. dela Eva, M.D., secretary, and Patrick Gerard L. Moral, M.D., treasurer.

From left: Rolando dela Eva, M.D., consultant; Ruth Divinagracia, M.D., consultant; Ma. Felicidad Soto, M.D., section head; Ruby Manalastas, M.D., consultant; not in photo is Mercy Gappi, M.D., consultant.

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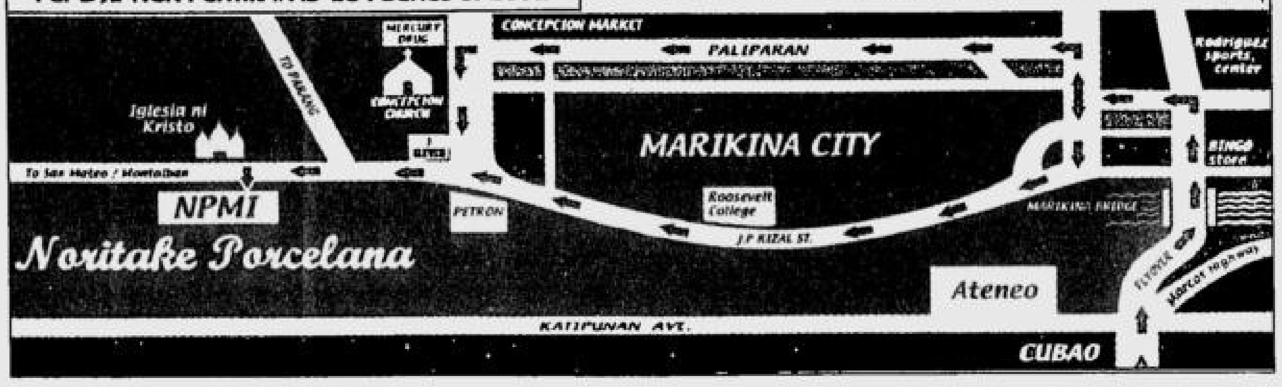

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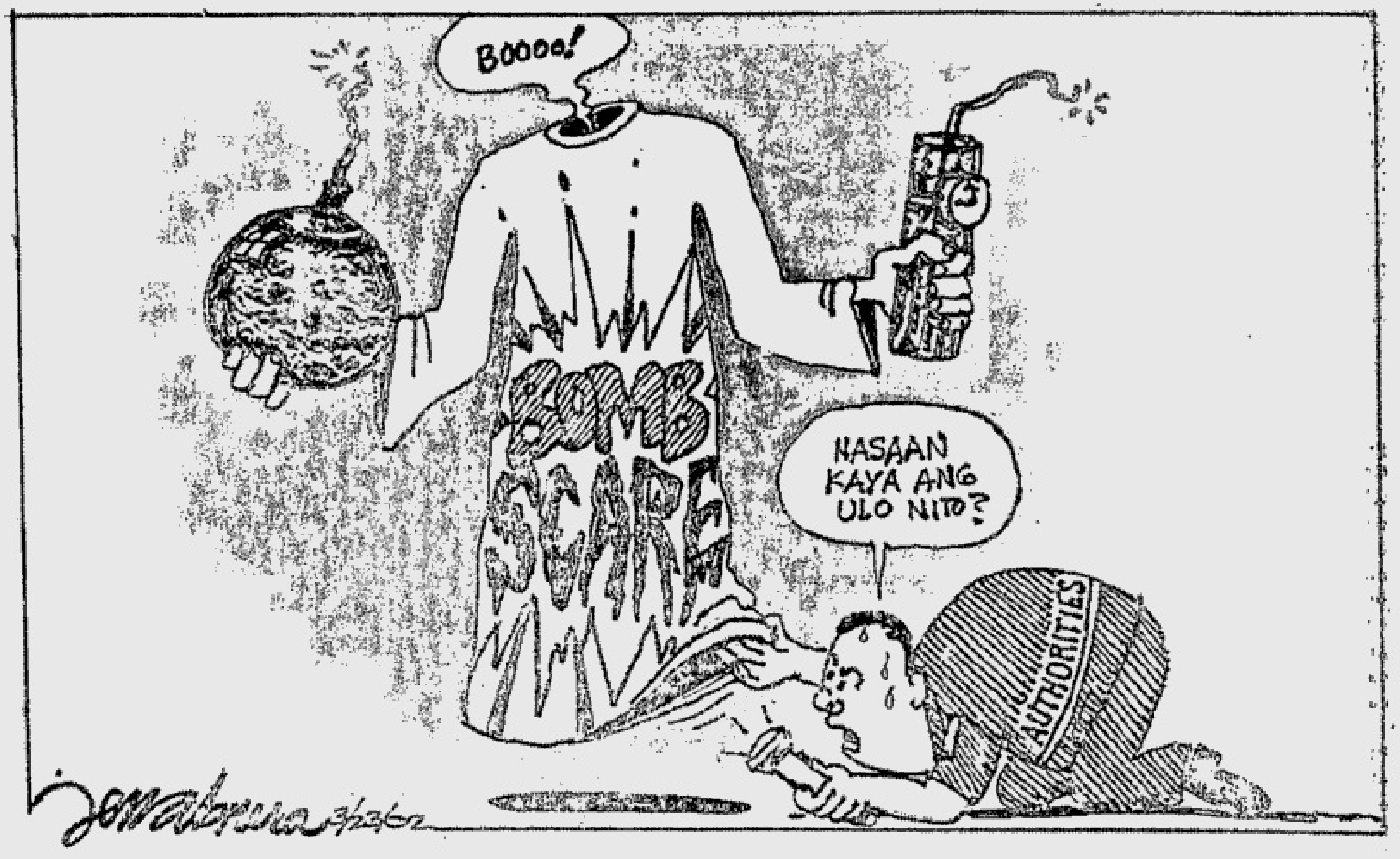
BOOOO!
BOMB SCARE
NASAAN KAYA ANG ULO NITO?
AUTHORITIES

Mocking the police

EDITORIAL

THE DISCOVERY during the past five days of seven unexploded bombs in several parts of Metro Manila was enough to prompt the National Anti-Crime Commission to convene in an attempt to determine who is responsible for them and what are the reasons behind the bomb plants in densely populated areas.

Although none of the bombs exploded, they nonetheless created a mild scare, given that the capital had gone through volatile political tensions stemming from threats of unrest in the streets over former President Joseph Estrada's arraignment on a perjury charge last week as well as reported terrorist networks operating inside the country.

A group called the Indigenous Federal State Army (Ifsa) claimed responsibility for the plants. It is not on the list of police record of troublesome and shadowy political groups. Its demand is even bizarre: the division of the country into three states: Christian, Islamic and indigenous. Ifsa's claim of responsibility stretches credulity, since this is the first time such a proposal has been put forward and it does not excite passions.

Military and police ordnance experts have found that the bombs do not have devices that trigger explosions, giving rise to the obvious conclusion that the bombs were not intended to harm people but merely scare the public. If they were not meant to harm, what then is the political message or the intention?

The authorities have no hard clues on who are and what is behind the scare, resulting in a wide open search of its instigators, including the communists, terrorists linked to al-Qaida networks and even partisans of former President Estrada out to "destabilize" the Macapagal administration. Even more puzzling is the fact that the police have not arrested any suspect, although they are quick to pronounce the bombs as harmless.

The wild goose chase for suspects underlines the inability of the police to pinpoint the culprits and calm nervous citizens whose memories are still fresh of the Dec. 30, 2001 bomb attacks on LRT trains and terminals that killed 17 people and injured 120 others.

There is wild speculation that an atmosphere of fear is being built up ahead of the May 1 rebellion anniversary to scare people from joining mass rallies commemorating the event. But this is belied by the fact that the government has improved its ability to control street unrest and that not many people are willing to march in the streets to join Estrada's assault on the judicial system. Businessmen who held a conference this week have concluded that Estrada "is a spent force" and no longer constitutes a security threat. So it is most unlikely that the bomb plants were the handiwork of desperate groups associated with the former president.

No matter who is responsible, playing with bombs, whether they have detonators or just plain duds, is a dangerous exercise. Certain groups are clearly mocking the authorities. The police can't be complacent with the finding that the crude bombs have no explosive triggering devices. The fact that those duds were planted means that there is an organization that can also fabricate live bombs and can explode them in densely populated places. We don't have to wait until bombs explode and cause carnage before the authorities do more than just fabricate theories,

Deputy sheriff

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to send 1,700 combat troops and support personnel to Afghanistan represents a significant, perilous deepening of direct British military involvement in America's global war against al-Qaida, Taliban and like-minded "evil-doers." Britain has been riding shotgun on George Bush's anti-terrorist stagecoach since the United States began its armed response to the Sept. 11 attacks last October. Now it has been promoted to deputy sheriff.

As is often the case with promotions, it is unclear whether increased responsibility will bring increasing influence. The newly deploying British units will remain firmly under US command, reinforcing an impression already formed in the skies over Iraq and in Kosovo of a surrogate army marching to Washington's tune. An enhanced British military commitment should logically mean enhanced British political clout. But the evidence that this will happen is not encouraging. On the contrary, Britain is being sucked ever more stickily into a widening conflict produced and directed in America and over which, in all honesty, it has very little [illegible]

—The Guardian (London)

The Mark Jimenez extradition case

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

FROM FAR off Florida, we are informed that the trial of Charlie "Atong" Ang for extradition to the Philippines is going on and that he has been denied bail because of the seriousness of the crimes for which he is sought by our government. It is plain that the United States is taking expeditious action on our request for Ang's return to our country in accordance with its obligations under the RP-US extradition treaty.

How about Mark Jimenez? What is our government doing on the request for his extradition to the United States as a fugitive from American justice? Are we complying with our own obligations under that treaty? FBI Director Robert Mueller was wondering about this last Tuesday.

Many people, particularly those in the sixth congressional district of Manila, are more than mildly interested. The reason is that, notwithstanding that pending request, Jimenez was elected to our House of Representatives last year. He is now facing an election protest for vote-buying and other irregularities and quo warranto petitions questioning his qualifications.

On June 18, 1999, the justice secretary received from the foreign secretary a note verbale from the United States government requesting the extradition of Jimenez for various crimes he has allegedly committed in that country. Attached to the request were his grand jury indictment, the warrant of arrest against him, and other supporting papers.

The crimes imputed to him are two counts of conspiracy to defraud the United States, with a maximum penalty of five years on each count; four counts of attempt to evade or defeat tax, with a maximum penalty of five years on each count; two counts of fraud by wire, radio or television, with a maximum penalty of five years on each count; six counts of false statements or entries, with a maximum penalty of five years on each count; and 33 counts of election contributions in name of another, with a maximum penalty of less than one year on each count.

If convicted on all counts except on the last crime, Jimenez may be sentenced to a maximum of 70 years in prison, not including the penalties for the 33 counts of illegal election contributions.

While the note verbale was being evaluated by the Department of Justice, Jimenez asked for copies of the document and other pertinent papers; as well as the suspension of the proceedings so he could study the charges. When these requests were denied, he filed a petition for mandamus that was granted by the Manila RTC. The DOJ then appealed to the Supreme Court, which originally affirmed but later reversed the lower court.

On Jan. 18, 2000, the 9-6 *ponencia* of Justice Jose A. R. Melo sustained the right of Jimenez to be informed of the charges against him. It was overturned, however, with Justice Reynato S. Puno writing the resolution granting the motion for reconsideration. The vote was again 9-6, but this time against Jimenez.

On March 18, 2001, the DOJ filed Extradition Case No. 01-192061 against Jimenez also known as Mario Batacan Crespo.

According to PD 1069, the presiding judge of the regional trial court shall, upon receipt of a petition for extradition, summon the respondent and order him to appear before it and answer the charge on the specified day and hour. The judge may issue a warrant of arrest if this will best serve the ends of justice, particularly to prevent the flight of the prospective extraditee. The court ordered Jimenez's arrest but released him on a bail bond of P1 million.

Some people may be wondering why Jimenez is at large while Ang is in an American prison. The reason is that under our Constitution, bail is a matter of right to every person before conviction except those charged with offenses punishable by *reclusion perpetua* or higher when evidence of guilt is strong. Moreover, Jimenez's flight from this jurisdiction is unlikely if only because he is a member of Congress and has many properties and other assets in this country.

If after the hearing, a *prima facie* case is established against the respondent, the court shall order his extradition; otherwise, the petition shall be dismissed. The verdict shall be appealable to the Court of Appeals, whose decision shall be final and immediately executory. If that decision affirms the judgment of the lower court, a warrant of surrender shall then be issued and the fugitive shall be delivered to the authorities of the requesting state.

There is talk even now that if Jimenez is found extraditable, the House of Representatives will prevent his surrender on the ground that it alone has the power to expel him. This is absolute twaddle and Deputy Speaker Raul M. Gonzalez was right to immediately squelch it. For his part, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto would "insist" that Jimenez first testify in the Estrada plunder case before he can be extradited. Who is Desierto to defer the enforcement of a treaty?

At the rate the Ang case is progressing, the United States may arrive at its own decision on our request for his extradition faster than the Philippine government can act on the Mark Jimenez case. This should surprise no one familiar with the sleepy pace of court proceedings in this country where every day is siesta time.

So what's the latest on the Mark Jimenez case? Is it slumbering like the Lacson case?

More than games

COMMENTARY

Eloisa F. Callender

I ASKED Prof. Asiri Abubakar of the University of the Philippines' Asian Center if using the "M" word in this column would offend Filipino Muslims. "Oh, no," he said, "we're proud to be called Moros."

Moros is what Muslim Filipinos proudly call themselves in Southern Philippines where American soldiers are deployed to: (a) officially, participate in the oxymoronic "war games," and (b) unofficially, hunt down members of the Abu Sayyaf with suspected links to al-Qaida. *Moro-moro* is what some Filipinos, Muslims and Christians alike, call what's going on there right now.

To understand, we need to go back to 19th-century Philippines when the Spanish colonial government, which ruled the country for over 300 years, was on the verge of losing its grip. Fearing a revolt, it put a lid on Filipinos' aspirations for independence by banning almost any form of self-expression that could be used against the government. Undeterred, the locals presented plays combining drama and dances to entertain their colonizers.

At least that's how it appeared on the surface. In reality, the plays were well-disguised political satire, full of double-entendres. The Spaniards heard comedic repertoire; the locals heard criticisms of the very people being entertained. The Spaniards particularly enjoyed the combat scenes between Christians and Muslims (*moro-moro* in the local argot) with the expected outcome of the Muslims, the "evil ones," being vanquished. Only the locals knew it wasn't about good vs. evil but an ingenious way of practicing martial arts in front of the people who banned them. In the end, the colonizers got great entertainment, and the locals had the last laugh.

Today we are witnessing a real-life *moro-moro*. The stage in this theater is crowded with 660 American and 3,800 Filipino soldiers hunting down "60 or so" Abu Sayyaf members. The play follows the same good-vs-evil script and the outcome is more or less predictable [illegible] against the Abu Sayyaf.

No angels, the Abu Sayyaf made a business out of kidnapping people for ransom, creating a political embarrassment for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. With her popularity dwindling, she vowed that her government would "rain bullets" on the Abu Sayyaf, at one point boasting on American prime-time TV that a kidnapped American couple would be rescued "in the next 30 minutes." I am glad I didn't hold my breath for that one.

This is not to say that the Philippine military, despite its pathetic state, could not have taken the Abu Sayyaf down. At one point Philippine troops had them trapped in a hospital compound. What happened next is subject to speculation. The Abu Sayyaf either escaped or were allowed to escape as accusations flew about collusion between the group and the military, perhaps in exchange for a share of the ransom. It seemed that both sides preferred the status quo: the Abu Sayyaf in the jungle; the soldiers in the city. No casualties that way.

Then Sept. 11 happened.

In a masterful passing of the buck, Ms Macapagal turned a festering domestic problem and potential liability in a possible 2004 presidential bid into an international problem. With dazzling speed, she offered support in the fight against terrorism, asked for—and got—$100 million in US military aid, and then hired a PR firm to help sell US involvement in the war against the Abu Sayyaf to Filipinos, who gave it an approval rating of over 80 percent.

And why not? The Amerikanos want to solve a local problem, pay for it and risk their lives doing it? Sure. Go right ahead.

There's just one problem with this scenario. The Visiting Forces Agreement which makes a US military presence possible in the Philippines prohibits US forces from engaging in combat. Under the agreement, visiting US forces are allowed in the country for a limited time and only for joint military exercises with Philippine troops. In fact, at no time are US forces allowed to operate independently within Philippine territory.

The solution to this dilemma? Put US soldiers in the lair of the Abu Sayyaf on Basilan island, prompting critics to accuse the US forces of baiting for an encounter so they can fire back in "self-defense." The Abu Sayyaf isn't biting, however, preferring to run around in the jungle with the kidnapped American couple as human shields. So Filipino troops, accompanied by US troops, may, during "training," wink and go deep in the jungle to pursue the kidnapper. Just your everyday war games, no combat, wink, wink.

As Abubakar put it, "No one is fooled by any of this." Which raises a few questions: Will the perceived bending of VFA rules jeopardize the credibility of future military exercises among Filipinos? Will this promote or undermine RP-US relations in the long run? What American security interest is being served by spending millions of dollars battling a gang of "60 or so" members?

This *moro-moro* would have made for great entertainment had the deaths on both sides not been so real, including the deaths of Filipino volunteer civilians by friendly fire and of 10 US soldiers in a helicopter crash—the biggest number of US military casualties in a single incident since the war on terrorism started.

There will be more deaths, but the show must go on. So sit back and watch, because your taxes are paying for it. At the end of the show, ask yourself this question: Who had the last laugh?

Eloisa F. Callender is a Madison-based freelance writer who spent three years researching the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement and regional security issues in Southeast Asia.

Probe of rural electric cooperatives needed

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SEVERAL WEEKS back I wrote about "Trouble in Paradise," when massive power outages in the world-acclaimed Boracay, the country's premier tourist destination, threatened to spoil the summer season for the 139 resorts there which have to survive on generators. This led the resort owners to fire a desperate letter of appeal to President Macapagal. Energy Secretary Vince Perez intervened by putting the island directly under the Napocor, upon recommendation of the board of the Aklan Electric Cooperative (Akelco), which used to handle the power distribution in the area.

This, however, is a stop-gap measure. Aside from the inefficiency of the Akelco management which ran up huge debts with the Napocor, there could be more serious reasons, necessitating a deeper probe into the problems of rural cooperatives.

* * *

Aklan's neophyte Rep. Gabrielle Calizo pointed out in a recent privilege speech that the Central Negros Electric Cooperative (Ceneco), which distributes electric power to a number of cities and towns in Negros Occidental, seems to be plagued by similar problems of "arthritic management" and even possible irregularities, just like Akelco in her native Aklan. Calizo asked what legislators could do to address these ailments, adding, "Are the laws on rural electrification so ineffective that an inept management can easily wreak havoc and get away with it?

Last Thursday former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan, who is credited with having made his province the "cooperative capital" during his three terms as governor, launched his book, "An Urgent Call for a Cooperative Revolution." Obet, who now chairs the Philippine Cooperative Center which has a nationwide membership, describes the cooperative phenomenon as the great equalizer of wealth, and there's no question about the benefits to be derived from the cooperatives, if properly run. But obviously a revolution in the cooperatives' management is now needed, as the Ceneco and Akelco experience demonstrates.

* * *

At the Clark conference, I asked Secretary Marita Jimenez, who has been tasked by the President to push for more aggressive absorption of Official Development Assistance, why the ODA was not utilized properly in the past. During the Erap regime, the ODA utilized in 1999-2000 fell below P1 billion, an all-time low. Jimenez explained that one reason could be the failure of some ODA-funded projects to gain "social acceptance." She mentioned the multi-billion San Roque Dam which took a long time to be accepted by some people in Northern Luzon, despite the enormous benefits to be gained from it. Then there's bureaucratic red tape which, she stressed, is now being reduced. There's also the need for counterpart funding for the loan component of the ODA, which the government in the past was hard put to cough up. When Ms Macapagal assumed office in January 2001, the budget deficit was at an all-time high of P240 billion, and she immediately wanted to reduce it to P145 billion for 2001 (it still reached P147 billion) and P130 billion for this year. Because of the tight budget, however, putting up counterpart funds for ODA loans remains difficult.

* * *

On the Sunday dzRH radio program I co-host with Cecile Alvarez, we took a look at poverty alleviation from a new angle: culture and the arts. We invited multi-awarded painter and art educator Fernando Sena to speak about his three decades of dedicated involvement in teaching students from poor families how to paint for art's sake and make a living from it. Sena has been teaching art to people from all walks of life, including doctors, lawyers and businessmen. When my children were very young, they attended his classes, and my daughter Christine won several art contests under his tutelage.

But Sena's heart is truly for the students from very poor families, and this is not surprising, for his life is an inspiring example of how a gifted but poor man can make it to the top. His father was a market vendor while his mother was a *plantsadora*, and he might never have made it to the University of the East College of Fine Arts had he not won a full scholarship under the sponsorship of the Children's Museum and Library Inc. Since he became an art professional, tutoring the very poor kids in art has been his passion, and he has worked with many NGOs involved with the poor such as Fr. Pierre Tritz's Erda Foundation.

* * *

Now Sena has set up the Art Discovery & Learning Foundation Inc. with the cooperation of minded artists and other citizens, in order to sustain talented but poor students in training workshops and to send the most gifted among them to fine arts schools on scholarships. Sena is particularly concerned about the drug problem among the young and says that getting them involved in art is a most effective way to combat it. To raise funds for this foundation, his group will hold a raffle of artworks donated by well-known artists such as Malang, Lino Severino, Ramon Orlina, Impy Pilapil and himself on April 20 at 2 p.m., at the MAB Hall of the Philippine Heart Center. Raffle tickets cost P5,000 but Sena assures that no ticket holder will go home empty-handed. Many artists have donated their works of art, but Sena needs many more to make this fund-raising for poor but deserving art students successful. He's appealing to his fellow artists for donations. Call Sena at 924-6425/925-8801, or Art Discovery's VP, Jaime S. Navarro, at 631-4921.

The 'putol' non-issue

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE "PUTOL" issue is just one example of how easy it is to manufacture a controversy and stir up passions in a country where, you'd think, people had enough things to get excited over. (Alma and Joey are still fighting, for instance, and by the way, did you know that Claudine and Rico have broken up?)

But because the proposal made by Sen. Loi Ejercito that convicted rapists be punished not by death but by castration has opened the door to heated debates on everything from capital punishment to the nature of rape, let us, to quote the immortal words of our President, "make *patol*" *na nga* to the issue.

Why do men rape?

Your answer will, I think, determine your stand on the desirability of castration—by chemical or surgical means—as a solution to the growing problem of rape.

If you believe that men rape because they have no way of controlling their sexual impulses and desires, then castration would seem to make sense. As one of the "pro" panelists in the TV show "Debate" asserted, since the penis was used as a weapon of assault, then the penis should be cut off and discarded. (Though to my knowledge, none of the proposals so far calls for a Lorena Bobbit Special.)

But even if you believe that lust and uncontrollable desire lie at the root of rape, the penis seems to me just a scapegoat. The penis achieves erection only because the mind has sent hormonal signals to the nerves that control a man's reproductive organs. Desire is born in the brain. So if you subscribe to "an eye for an eye," then the ideal punishment for rape would not be castration but lobotomy.

* * *

WOMEN, though, very much doubt if rape is caused by men's uncontrollable desires—which is what men have been saying all these years. Blaming their libido and "nature" has for too long been used by men to absolve themselves of any responsibility for weakness. It is "natural" for men to be violent, so women shouldn't provoke them if they don't want to get beaten up. Men are "naturally" lustful creatures, so women have only themselves to blame if they somehow arouse prurient thoughts and lascivious behavior.

One would think that women would welcome the threat of castration, since death doesn't seem much of a deterrent. But blaming the penis or the scrotum draws attention and responsibility away from where it properly belongs—the man himself and the society that made him that way.

If rape is a crime of lust and passion, then why have babies as young as six months and grandmothers in their 80s been raped? If rapists are turned on by bare flesh, then why have nuns in their habits, or women in burqas, been raped? And why is it that in gang rapes, the men involved often find themselves unable to achieve erection and thus resort to using substitutes, such as a bottle or a broomstick or a clenched fist, to violate the victim?

* * *

"RAPE is a crime of violence and domination." That has been the feminist mantra for the past decades or so.

And yes, there are enough studies that show that rape has often been used to achieve ends other than just a climax or ejaculation. Rape has been used as a weapon and strategy of war, to inflict the final humiliation on the enemy so as to break the opponent's morale. Rape, or the threat of rape, has been employed by society to keep women at home and under the domination of their husbands or male relatives. As Susan Brownmiller, in her trailblazing book on rape declares: "Rape is the weapon used by every man to keep every woman in her place."

And yet, if violence is the object, why not just beat a woman black and blue? If domination is the ultimate goal, why not just prohibit a woman from leaving the house and talking to other people? Why rape her?

Because, in a society that perversely considers women as nothing more than sex objects, the loss of sexual integrity is considered the ultimate violation. That is why rape was previously classified as a crime against chastity. According to the social mores at the time the old penal code was adopted, a woman's primary value **was** her chastity. Violate that and the woman was worth nothing.

That's also the reason certifiable non-virgins, such as prostitutes, were laughed off police precincts and courts when they dared lodge charges of rape against a client or pimp. How could a woman who exchanged sexual services for money be violated sexually? Thankfully, now that rape is classified as a crime against a person, then even a woman who no longer has an intact hymen, or who makes her living having sex with paying customers, can still find justice in our courts. Even if you're paying, you still don't have the right to force a woman to have sex with you if she doesn't want to. Even if you're her husband, for that matter.

* * *

MAKING *putol the ari* of the rapist, or at least removing his ability to produce sperm or achieve erection, will not bring down the incidence of rape or sexual molestation.

As the "anti" guests on "Debate," especially Dr. Guy Estrada-Claudio of Likhaan, declared: Castration will in fact increase the incidence of rape, since it reinforces the addled notion that rape is a crime of unbridled lust and passion. You want women to live in a world free from rape? Give them a world free from the notion that men not only have no control over their sex drive, but that they have the right to give in to it, however, whenever, with whomever.

Eggs and then some...

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L.Harper

A NIECE of mine thought an article by food columnist Robert Wolke on eggs would be of interest especially since Easter is just around the corner. It didn't occur to me earlier, but the Easter bunny brings Easter eggs, right? If these are chicken eggs, why is a rabbit, and not a chicken, bringing them? (And don't tell me it's because rabbits don't lay eggs.) I realize that a lot of people love eggs—scrambled, fried, poached and even raw. This article is basically for people who either like eating eggs or enjoy cooking. All of you with high cholesterol counts skip this column.

Eggs with double yolks are rare and only 3 to 5 percent of hens' eggs have them. When this occurs, producers set them aside since "double-yolk eggs are in demand for their novelty, and the supply can't keep up." There are actually restaurants in the United States that specialize in serving double egg-yolks for breakfast.

Only occasionally will a hen lay double-yolk eggs throughout her productive cycle. These types of eggs are laid by heavier hens that have been overfed at the beginning of their laying cycle. A hen that lays a double-yolk egg one day may not even lay an egg the following day or may lay one without a yolk.

Here we generally have only small, medium and large rather than jumbo, extra large, large, medium, small and peewee. Recipes (stateside ones anyway) apparently are developed using large eggs. "A dozen large eggs are equivalent to 9 jumbos, 10 extra-large and 13 medium—the three other sizes you're most likely to find in the supermarket. If in doubt, use ¼ cup of beaten egg for every egg specified in the recipe."

I never heard of the Department of Agriculture grading them according to quality as AA, A or B like its US counterpart does. Not being overly fond of eggs, I have to accept Wolke's word that "the best egg yolks are firm and round and their whites are thick; their shells are well shaped and clean, with few ridges or rough spots."

Since I just managed to crack the shell of the egg I was boiling (straight from the ref), to all of you out there who don't know how to boil eggs, Wolke says don't. You should start them in cold water and simmer them gently just below the boiling point for 12 to 15 minutes. Cool them in cold running water which "shrinks the albumen (the egg white) away from the shell somewhat and makes an egg easier to peel." (This is for those persons who want to know why the shell peels off easily sometimes.)

Eggs crack because of the stress on a cold shell from hot water. Another cause "is the pocket of air that lies inside the wide end of every egg. When heated suddenly, it expands suddenly and exerts pressure on the shell, which may crack it if it has a weak spot." Even if shells look perfectly intact to the naked eye, if you hold them up to a bright light you'll often see fissures in them.

I never noticed, but it seems hard-boiled egg yolks actually come out greenish grey sometimes. Not to worry, according to Wolke, it's only harmless iron sulphide, also known as ferrous sulphide. "It will form when some of the sulphur-containing albumen proteins in the egg white decompose into hydrogen sulphide gas, which diffuses throughout the egg. When it reaches the surface of the yolk, it reacts with the yolk's iron content, forming ferrous sulphide."

Yucky. Who cares why it turns green? For whatever reason, I can't imagine eating green scrambled eggs though I do eat century eggs.

I have also read that if you add a pinch of salt when boiling an egg it won't crack. Sorry, it didn't work with me, and Wolke agrees that "there is no evidence that it works. You could add vinegar to the water which will then coagulate any egg white leaking from a cracked shell." (Having flunked Chemistry as well, I didn't know acids coagulated proteins. And why would you want to do that anyway?)

It turns out that Wolke is a professor emeritus of Chemistry at the University of Pittsburgh who has written books such as "What Einstein Told His Barber: More Scientific Answers to Everyday Questions" and "What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained."

My niece decided she would be helpful (she probably guessed I can't boil an egg without cracking it) and send us also a procedure on how to boil perfect eggs à la Julia Child:

Make sure the eggs are at room temperature. Cool water should cover the eggs. Make sure they're not crowded. Turn to low-medium heat. Bring to a simmer. Once it's simmering, cover securely and weigh down the cover. (Why?) Remove from heat. (She doesn't say how long one is supposed to be weighing down this cover either.) Finally, remove from heat and let stand for half an hour. Then pour out the hot water, run cool water over the eggs for a few minutes and set aside before peeling.

At this point I was going to suggest we just stick to scrambled eggs or fried ones, until it dawned on me that some of you might actually be boiling them to color for Easter. In the event you're lazy, Goldilocks used to have perfectly good ones to use for an Easter hunt although the children might enjoy making their own Easter eggs as an activity.

To all you wonderful readers, whether you believe or not: Wishing you the wonder and joy of Christ's Resurrection throughout the rest of the year.

Women's bodies

YOUNGBLOOD

Lucille D. Vergara

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

IT started with Laetitia. My fascination with a woman's body started when I first saw her smiling from the cover of an international magazine. Her curves moved me gently to an untimely death in an ocean of mixed emotions.

"Laetitia, Laetitia," I uttered her name as though it would make me forget my own. I looked up to every billboard that had her godly body on it. I cut out pictures from the magazine where she shared secrets about her diet. In one interview, she admitted that she liked eating chocolates and hated to exercise. Where, pray, did those sinful chocolates go?

My fascination with one woman's body became a fascination with the bodies of other women. I started to notice firm abs like that of Britney Spears, Jennifer Lopez's butt, and Nicole Kidman's legs, not to forget Giselle Bundchen's perfect body statistics.

It wasn't only the Hollywood stars. I started noticing and really paying attention to the women on our school campus. I liked women who wore tube tops as much as those who wore a loose T-shirt to class. To me a tube top was like a short story while a T-shirt was like a poem. There were lots of women and my mind got frantic at times. There were those who wore jeans, shorts, skirts, pedals, blouses, shirts and dresses. Women's bodies are beautiful no matter what shape or size or what they're wearing.

These women's bodies frighten me at times, though. You can never tell how many times those curves are abused by a man's unwelcome touch or even his stare. There are many ways a beautiful body can be violated by the norms of a patriarchal society. Most women are compelled to dress in a certain way hoping to get a husband or a job. Men cannot stand a *losyang*, yet they demand that a woman should not expose so much flesh lest she be called a whore. Men label women as skinny, sexy or fat; no woman falls in between. Beauty salons and spas have grown like mushrooms in our society because most women flock to these establishments to please their partners and other people. Beauty magazines will never lose circulation for as long as there is a single woman alive.

I wonder how many of them are trapped in this thinking. I marvel at how much time each of them spent choosing the right clothes to cover a beautiful body underneath. How much have they spent for soaps, body wash and creams to use in the bath? How many of them are aware that their bodies are as perfect as Laetitia's or Giselle's?

I am a woman myself—a woman who glances at the mirror and cringes at the sight of cellulite on my young body. Like any other woman, I have sworn to observe endless fad diets, hoping to get a waif-like body. I have spent a considerable amount of money buying tons of lotions to make my skin as soft as a baby's, volumes of soaps and body wash to make me smell good. And because society requires it, I have bought several clothes although I can actually manage with two or three.

My fascination with other women's bodies was a realization that gripped me whole. I am not a homosexual. I adore some men in my life and I love them brutes. But their body is an obscenity while a woman's is like a prayer, almost a sacrifice.

This idea went full circle while I was watching this woman changing clothes in our room. Hers was a body that was tired after a day's work and carried traces of time and memories of the past. It was a body that had known the pain (and hopefully joy) of raising a daughter alone. It was my mother's—and every woman's—body.

It was beautiful.

Lucille D. Vergara, 20, is a student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman. Every woman's body is beautiful, she says, but her Mama's is the sexiest of them all.

Cold steel

Mark Philips Torres

I HAD to rush to Ortigas for a meeting one Friday morning recently. I still hadn't gotten some decent sleep, and the food I took was a poor excuse for a breakfast. But I was looking forward to a livelier evening.

I took an FX taxi and took the front seat as usual. A lady in her early 20s boarded the taxi a few minutes later.

Seeing that traffic was heavy the driver decided to take a different route. Almost as soon as we turned, two teenagers got in and took the middle seats. Then a *yaya* and her *alaga* took one of the back seats.

The girl beside me had dozed off when her phone began to ring. She pulled out the Nokia 8210 from her bag and started texting.

As we were about to turn to the main road again, two men in *sandos*, shorts and slippers flagged our vehicle down. The driver stopped and the two got in. However, one of them took the middle seat while the other took one of the back seats. Strange.

When the first guy handed their fare to the driver, I couldn't help but notice his gruff manner. Moments later, he ordered the driver to stop.

Though puzzled by the very short distance the two had traveled, the driver complied.

That was when things got ugly. Instead of opening the door and getting off, the guy behind me reached over our seat and ordered the woman beside me to hand over her cell phone. "Miss, *akin na 'to!*" he said.

We were all caught by surprise as the man and the woman struggled for possession of the phone.

I decided to help her and held the arm of the robber. In a flash, the devil pulled out a revolver and pointed it at my head.

I began to sweat and prayed that the felon wasn't the trigger-happy type. Things could get messy, I realized.

Sensing an opportunity to escape, the driver quickly unbuckled his seatbelt and tried to open the door. The gunman noticed this immediately and aimed the gun at him.

"*Sige, subukan mo! Babarilin kita!*" he threatened, as we froze in our seats.

The poor fellow eases himself back to his seat as the robber took advantage of our fright. His accomplice shouted from the back, "*Ibigay mo na kasi!*"

Tearfully, the woman surrendered her treasured 8210. And the gunman pointed his weapon at each of us one more time.

Mercifully, the two felons seemed satisfied with their loot and dashed off.

I thought that the woman beside me would have a nervous breakdown. So I tried to calm her down as best as I could.

We remained frozen at the same spot as we all tried to regain our composure. The two young men in the middle seat were sweating profusely. The *yaya* was embracing and kissing her crying *alaga*.

For the rest of our trip, everyone was quite. I could feel the woman trying to hold back her tears. But I couldn't keep away the thought of how close I was to being killed. I don't think I will ever forget the sight of the gun and the feel of cold steel on my head.

It's really sickening to know that some people are willing to kill, and get killed, for a cell phone. Makes me wonder if that is all what life is worth now.

I don't think I will ever be able to look at an 8210 the same way again.

Mark Philips Torres, 22, is a freelance graphics designer.

LETTERS

Bonifacio Monument shouldn't be a victim of progress

EVERYTHING must give way to development, sooner or later. The Ninoy Aquino International Airport 3 needs a larger area to meet the required standard for its operation as an international airport, so the Nayong Pilipino theme park is due to be erased from our cultural and tourism maps. Maybe we don't need parks anymore because people now frequent malls which are mushrooming everywhere in Metro Manila.

Now the latest victim of "development" is the symbol of our national pride, the symbol of the Philippine revolution against colonizers, the symbol of history and inspiration and hope: the Bonifacio Monument. The construction of the Metro Rail Transit from North Avenue toward Monumento is said to justify the relocation of the Bonifacio Monument.

Can't the engineers do something to protect this great work of art by our national artist Guillermo Tolentino? Instead of hitting the monument, why don't they hit some commercial establishments?

Even during the reign of fascism in Europe, during World War II, museums were spared from bombings to avoid the destruction of works of art and other valuable historical items. Perhaps the officials of Caloocan City are more concerned with the welfare of some interested groups who will benefit from the relocation of the monument.

During the liberation of Manila near the end of World War II, Americans indiscriminately bombed the city to flush out the Japanese Imperial Army. As a result, most of the historical churches inside Intramuros were destroyed and almost all government buildings of great architectural design were also pulverized.

The Bonifacio Monument and its present site in Caloocan are both significant symbols of our history. If they relocate the monument to the Tala Leprosarium, it would be like relegating a great work of art within the confines of a cabinet when its very purpose is to be seen and appreciated by many.

Appreciation of works of art and their historical significance is not a stumbling block to progress.

Every time we pass by the Bonifacio Monument, we are reminded and inspired by the great heroism of our people against foreign colonizers. We dream for our country's future, we imagine great things for our people and not just for the few. Without these dreams and imaginings there will be no great inventions or discoveries for progress.

—NEIL DOLORICON, associate professor, Department of Visual Communication, College of Fine Arts, UP Diliman, Quezon City

GMA didn't correct her spokesperson

AMANDO Doronila's column last March 20 stated: "(Tiglao) does not always reflect accurately her point of view and he tended to misinterpret her, giving rise to occasions where the President had to correct him, much to his embarrassment."

This statement contains a gross error of fact. **There has been no such occasion.**

When I asked Doronila about this, he told me that his conclusion was based on a single article in the INQUIRER last Jan. 12, headlined "Gloria disowns Bobi on SMC interim accord."

This report was erroneous, and the very day it came out, I clarified to the reporter its inaccuracy. I even showed the reporter the minutes of the Cabinet meeting on this interim agreement. The President did not "disown" me; she was simply emphasizing that the agreement did not deal with the shares of Eduardo Cojuangco, which after all were covered by a Sandiganbayan case and therefore could not be the subject of any agreement.

This is precisely what I explained to Malacañang reporters days earlier. The interim agreement referred to an arrangement by which Cojuangco persuaded the directors appointed by the former president to step down from their directorships in San Miguel Corp. and in the United Coconut Planters Bank, and agreed to allow this administration's nominees to replace them.

This is really moot and academic now. The agreement was implemented last month, during the SMC stockholders' meeting in February.

Unlike other Cabinet members, my sole job is to speak for the President, and to explain her policies and decisions to the public. I may not be an orator, but I believe I have been doing my job.

The day I misinterpret the President or make a statement she has to correct, I will have to resign my post, since I lose my credibility in speaking for her and therefore fail to accomplish my only job in the government.—**RIGOBERTO TIGLAO, presidential spokesperson, Malacañang, Manila**

VAL HANDUMON

Betrayal of public trust

FIRST we were told that former President Joseph Estrada should be allowed to leave "hospital detention" so that he could get the best medical attention possible for his bad (osteoarthritic) knees. And since the best presumably can be found only outside the country, specifically in the United States, Estrada should be allowed by the court to go abroad. This is the "humanitarian" reason given by 19 of our honorable senators and 122 of similarly honorable congresspersons for signing the resolutions initiated by Estrada loyalists, Sen. Blas Ople and Rep. Didagen Dilangalen.

What our distinguished lawmakers—many of whom are lawyers—conveniently omit is that the ground cited for granting this unheard-of-privilege to one accused of a heinous, non-bailable crime punishable by death is completely without merit. Estrada's medical condition is not life-threatening. Top caliber medical expertise, technology and equipment are available right here in Metro Manila. What Filipino doctors were able to do for his eyes, they can very well do for his knees. We challenge anyone familiar with the state of science and art of knee surgery in the country to disprove this.

After this preposterously flimsy excuse was exposed, the call has shifted to a grant of exile to Estrada. Speaker Jose de Venecia started it by hinting that warring factions among our political elites could not kiss and make up after their polarization into pro- and anti-Erap camps so long as Estrada remains under detention. Makati Rep. Butz Aquino added that Estrada's "prolonged treatment" in the United States will benefit President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo because it will defuse a highly contentious issue which continues to be a source of government instability.

There we have it: this is all about political accommodation and compromise after all. Forget those lofty principles the people invoked in booting Estrada out of office a little more than a year ago—truth, justice, accountability of public officials, good governance and so forth and so on. The message our honorable legislators would now beam to our long-suffering and increasingly cynical people is that crime does pay.

Never mind if Estrada stands accused of plundering the people's money, using the most exalted position in the land for such thievery, then using it again to cover up his crimes. Never mind that plunder is economic sabotage, a treasonous offense by any standard.

Betrayal of the public trust by the country's highest official undoubtedly ranks among the worst of treasons. For this, Estrada is justly incarcerated and is being tried.

The problem unfortunately goes much further. It translates into tolerating and worse, encouraging, all corrupt and abusive public officials and all those aspiring for high office to go on with their merry way. The signal is crystal-clear: the higher and mightier you are, the more corruption you can commit with impunity. And if you are president, you can even get away with plunder. The resultant free-for-all raids on our nation's coffers is sure to plunge our economy, not to mention our ethical standards, into even greater depths.

Many have correctly pointed out that exile for Estrada would damage whatever remains of our so-called democratic institutions. Even more profound, pervasive and permanent is the damage it will inflict on our national psyche.

No matter how it is prettified, "humanitarian," "practical solution" or what not, this high-level wheeling and dealing is nothing but a wholesale betrayal of public trust that will only exacerbate rather than mitigate our nation's ills.

—CAROLINA PAGADUAN ARAULLO, convenor, Plunder Watch, 23 Maamo St., Sikatuna Village, Quezon City

Desperate to stop the wheel of justice

THE ANTICS of the Estrada group is an insult to the intelligence of Filipinos. As the tapes taken by GMA-7 in Edsa II shows, Erap has been judged guilty by the parliament of the streets, just as the impeachment proceedings in the Senate, if completed, would also have found him guilty of plunder.

Their attempt to bring his case out of the judiciary and into the streets simply means that the evidence was piling up and will surely send Erap to the gallows.

In a desperate effort to stop justice from taking its course, Erap like a madman has gone to the extent of maligning Chief Justice Hilario Davide. In a vain attempt to throw mud at Davide, he spread the lie that Lucio Tan had lobbied for Davide's appointment as chief justice.

The truth is that the influential presidential aide, Lito Banayo (my friend at the old Unido group), reminded Erap that Davide was the most deserving of appointment to chief justice. This was seconded by retiring Chief Justice Andres Narvasa. Thus, Erap appointed Davide.

All citizens of light and learning should condemn Erap. The Sandiganbayan should proceed and mete out justice to Erap. The Department of Justice should confine Erap at the city jail where he belongs. No one should be above the law.

—GAUDENCIO BEDUYA, G. Beduya Consultancy Group, Cebu City

Philip Morris filters no health risks

WE read the article you published last March 13, 2002, in your front page titled, "Philip Morris accused of using defective filters."

Philip Morris Philippines Inc. wishes to clarify that the article isn't news anymore.

It has long been known that particles can become dislodged from filters. Indeed, this issue was the subject of a public lawsuit filed seven years ago in Texas, featuring Dr. John Pauly, the author of the Tobacco Control article.

The court dismissed the case and held that Dr. Pauly was not qualified to testify about the effects, if any, of filter particles on smokers.

Nor has Philip Morris hidden the issue from scientists. For example, in 2000, Philip Morris USA provided information on the health effects of filter fibers on smokers to the United States Institute of Medicine.

We, of course, take seriously scientific reports claiming that an aspect of our product could increase the health effects of smoking. Based on our assessment of the available data, we believe that the filters we use do not pose additional health risks to smokers.

More specifically, for example, the evidence does not suggest that fibers from cigarette filters actually penetrate the lungs; in addition, the probability of inhalation is very low.

—DAVE M. GOMEZ, public affairs and communications manager, Philip Morris Philippines Inc., MCC P.O. Box 2338, Makati City 1299

Lim electoral protest gaining ground

I WRITE this letter so the people may know that my electoral protest against Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and its companion petition for disqualification are in progress and gaining headway.

Directors Ferdinand Rafanan and Esmeralda Amora-Ladra of the Commission on Elections-NCR made findings that Atienza violated Section 261 of the Election Code on five counts when, between Feb. 19 and March 29, 2001, he gathered barangay officials, youth, local elective officials and media people, before the elections but within the prohibited period, to campaign for and woo their votes and support for his reelection bid utilizing public funds to the tune of P2,329,136.36 in blatant violation of the Omnibus Election Code. In their 33-page report on Jan. 29, 2002 addressed to the Comelec, they recommended the annulment of Atienza's proclamation and his disqualification from continuing to hold office pursuant to Section 68 of the Code. They also recommended that a preliminary investigation be made to determine probable cause for his prosecution.

The progress is gratifying as it gives credence to the enduring principle that no one has the right to lay claim to a public position when he is found guilty of an election offense.

Atienza admitted incurring the expenses but justified it as part of good governance. Rafanan and Ladra did not swallow it hook, line and sinker since Atienza only had three months left to hold office in 2001 and had filed his certificate of candidacy.

We do not discern any difficulty on the part of the Comelec to resolve quickly the disqualification case especially since it is complemented by my electoral protest.

My protest is also succeeding well because we had uncovered that the last electoral exercise was a travesty of democracy and that fraud of untold proportion was blatantly committed, making the result a bogus expression of the voters' choice.

Upon revision of the ballot boxes for districts 1, 2 and 5, the keys for 585 boxes or 74 percent of those revised did not match the available keys, so that the padlocks had to be destroyed to get the ballots cast for recounting; 87 boxes did not have self-locking metal seals; 41 boxes did not contain the votes cast; 4,318 ballots cast were unsigned by the chairpersons at the back, an election offense; upper and lower stubs of the ballots cast were either neatly cut or never cut at all; ballots were written by two persons, or those for Atienza beautifully written in script but the rest in ugly style. I am confident that with the tens of thousands of Atienza's votes annulled, the result will be reversed in my favor.

—ALFREDO S. LIM, Manila

Israelis living in the shadow of death

FEATURE

Megan Goldin

JERUSALEM—Living in the shadow of death has become a daily ritual for ordinary Israelis targeted by Palestinian suicide bombings and shooting attacks as they sip coffee in cafés, queue outside discos, ride on buses and walk city streets.

Israelis were once able to set their watches by suicide bombings which tended to take place on Sunday mornings on inner-city buses. But since a Palestinian uprising against occupation began almost 18 months ago, all bets are off.

In a cycle of tit-for-tat violence, pizzerias, discos, supermarkets, bus stations, banqueting halls and shopping centers in Israeli cities have been hit by suicide bombings and shooting attacks by Palestinians at all hours of the day and night.

"When it happens you can't do anything about it. Suddenly it happens and all you can do is pray," said Arkady Kapul, an assistant at a toy store hit in a suicide bombing in 1997.

Kapul's bus ride to work is no less nerve-rattling than that of other Israeli commuters who scan each passenger's face to determine whether the soldier or ultra-Orthodox Jew who just boarded the bus is the real thing or a bomber in disguise. Every passenger is a suspect until proved otherwise.

"I look in people's eyes," Kapul said. "The only way you can identify them is to watch the way they behave. I even look to see if electric wires are hanging out of their bags." Kapul has jumped off buses at the sight of a suspicious passenger.

Some Israelis put their trust in God, or fate, and go about their daily business without a care. Some, like Nurit Siman-Tov, a sales assistant at a Jerusalem sweet shop, prepare for the day they will be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"If we hear an explosion or gun shots, we're supposed to hit the ground and then if it's safe, we should try to run to the storeroom to hide," said Siman-Tov, describing the emergency drill from behind a sales counter at the shop outside Jerusalem's main bus station.

"It all depends on how close the terrorist attack is to the shop. It might not be safe to run to the storeroom but we should try if we can because lying behind the counter won't protect us from bullets," Siman-Tov explained.

Packed restaurants have been magnets for suicide bombers who seek out crowds for attacks they say are carried out in revenge for Israel's killing of Palestinians since their uprising against Israeli occupation began in September 2000.

People select restaurants not by the menu but by whether there is a security guard. Is the café susceptible to shooting or grenade attacks? Are there vacant tables far from the entrance where bombers usually blow up?

Esther Brightburg thought the Moment café in a quiet Jerusalem residential neighborhood was too obscure to be targeted by Palestinian bombers. So the 17-year-old met a friend at Moment on a Saturday night two weeks ago.

A suspicious face among the crowd of café-goers made Brightburg jumpy enough to cut short her evening and leave, five minutes before a bomber detonated explosives strapped to his body at the entrance.

But the Israeli teenager's narrow escape has not deterred her from visiting cafés, cinemas and nightclubs with her friends instead of staying in the safety of her home every night. "It's better to live in fear than not to have a life at all," is the motto of her and her friends.

Like many Israeli youngsters, Brightburg is armed with a mobile phone which she uses to make reassuring calls to her family when she goes out on the town.

The collapse of cellular phone networks under the volume of calls by anxious relatives has become as routine after suicide bombings as live television broadcasts and newspapers plastered with smiling photographs of the victims in better days.

"Many of us live from one day to the next. We have never attributed special importance to just coming home; and now...getting home safely is not something we take for granted," columnist Nadav Shragai wrote in the Ha'aretz daily.

Going to the movies, eating at a favorite restaurant, even attending a wedding has become a weighty decision for Israelis wondering what the next target will be.

"Once you would go to the beach and you knew you were going to lie in the sun, listen to the water lap at your feet and forget about all your problems," said Ilan Kleintitkiyahu. "Today you go to the sea and it becomes a life and death decision. Should I or shouldn't I?"

Mazal Nadav has joined what has become Israel's national pastime: listening to the radio. She counts the sirens of ambulances as they pass by her house at night and if there are more than one or two she rushes over to the radio to check the news in case there has been a bombing.

"It's not a normal life," Nadav said. "I take the bus to work every day and my daughter tells me to be careful. I tell her I am careful but to tell you the truth I don't know how one can be careful."

Nadav and her middle-aged friends are planning a visit to the mountains to escape the tension in Jerusalem by looking for wild flowers in spring bloom.

But the blood-red poppies will provide little defense if a gunman opens fire from a hill, Nadav said, so those who have gun licenses will carry a side arm on the nature hike.

"We don't know where the next attack will be. Once I would have said Jerusalem was more dangerous than Tel Aviv...Today terrorism has crossed all borders," she said. "I don't know when my turn will come. I just know there is terror lurking behind every corner."

Reuters

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Suicide bombing kills 4, jolts talks

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian suicide bomber killed at least three people and wounded more than 40 others on a busy street in central Jerusalem Thursday, scuttling a round of Israeli-Palestinian ceasefire talks.

Security officials from both sides said new high-level talks scheduled to be held later the same day with US envoy Anthony Zinni were postponed after the bombing.

But Israel's security Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, opted for "restraint," rather then the usual policy of swift retaliation, to give a chance to the US ceasefire efforts, public television reported.

An anonymous caller said the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a radical group linked to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, was responsible for the bombing.

The bomber had been arrested last month by the Palestinian security services but was released although they knew he planned a suicide bombing, Sharon's office charged, adding that he was a Palestinian policeman.

Col. Jibril Rajoub, the head of West Bank preventative security, said the Israelis canceled the ceasefire talks.

There was no immediate word when the talks would resume, but the Israeli defense ministry said they had been "postponed," following a second suicide bombing in as many days.

"We would like to see a ceasefire . . . but this puts the whole situation in a very bad and sad state," Israeli government spokesperson Arieh Meckel said of efforts to halt 18 months of bloodshed that has claimed more than 1,560 lives.

Arafat said "we strongly condemn this attack in west Jerusalem on innocent Israeli civilians," vowing to take "immediate and necessary measures to stop this kind of attack and arrest those behind them, and we will not waste time doing so."

Israeli media, quoting hospital spokespersons, said at least two people had died in addition to the bomber. A third person later died of injuries sustained in the attack, television reported.

Police and rescue services said more than 40 were wounded, two seriously, in the blast in an area hit by four previous attacks, including a bombing at a pizzeria that killed 15 Israelis and wounded 88 in August.

Jerusalem police said they detained "several suspects" after the blast.

Ron Cohen, 13, told journalists at the scene he saw two men arrive at a bus stop. "One of them made a sign to the other, pointing to his stomach, and the other one exploded," he said.

The attack came a day after seven Israelis were killed by a suicide bomber in northern Israel. Sharon also refrained from a military response to Wednesday's bus bombing, carried out by the radical Islamic Jihad group.

The latest bombing and the fact it was claimed by a group linked to Arafat fueled frustration on the part of the United States and Israel with the Palestinian leader's failure to curb the attacks. *AFP*

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Peru trip on despite blast, Bush says

LIMA, Peru—Riot police on high alert cordoned off central Lima on Thursday but US President George W. Bush vowed a bomb blast by "two-bit terrorists" that killed nine near the US Embassy would not derail his weekend trip.

Washington suspected that Wednesday night's blast, which chilled many Peruvians with recollections of scenes of terror and carnage during the country's years of guerrilla violence in the '80s and '90s, was the work of Shining Path leftist rebels—a group the United States labels as terrorist.

"It's not definitive, but the signs point in that direction," said one intelligence official in Washington.

Peru last year said it had foiled a Shining Path attack on the fortress-like US Embassy in an upscale Lima district.

No one has yet claimed responsibility and Peru said it was ruling nothing out. It swiftly announced a security clampdown, deploying armored vehicles, putting police on "red alert" and sealing off a historic center usually clogged with honking minibuses and street vendors, ahead of Bush's 17-hour trip.

Bush, who has led a global war on terror in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, arrives in Lima on Saturday from a UN development conference in Monterrey, Mexico. He said nothing would derail his first visit to South America, also the first to Peru by a sitting US president.

"No two-bit terrorists are going to prevent me from doing what we need to do, and that is to promote our friendship in the hemisphere," he said earlier. "You bet I'm going."

Before Wednesday night's blast, meanwhile, Shining Path's jailed founder, Abimael Guzman, invited the head of Peru's Roman Catholic bishop's conference to the top-security jail where he is serving a life sentence—and made his first apology for his group's part in a war that cost 30,000 lives. *Reuters*

5 killed in new rioting in India

AHMEDABAD, India—A new flare-up of violence left five people dead and 19 wounded Thursday in Gujarat, the western Indian state where more than 700 people have died over the past month in the worst religious clashes in a decade.

Those dead included two Muslims killed when police fired into a crowd and two others killed amid gunfire by a Hindu mob, in Ahmedabad city, a police official said on condition of anonymity.

Another man, who was unidentified, was stabbed. At least 19 were wounded in the clashes, police said.

Muslims, India's largest minority community, have suffered most of the casualties in the recent rioting.

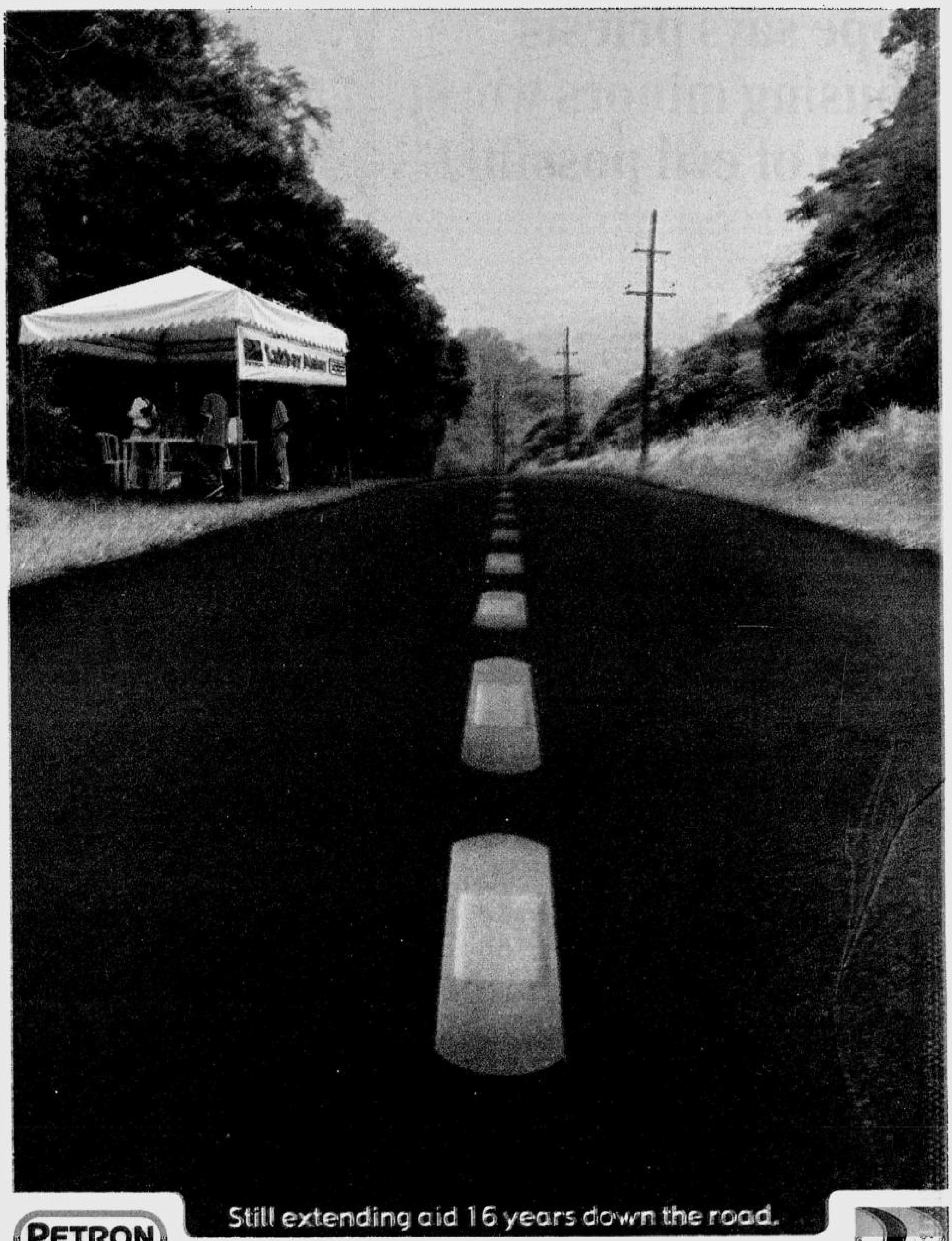
An Indian Army soldier was also wounded in the mob attack in the city, where Hindus burned down at least 50 Muslim-owned shops in a bustling market. Police banned large gatherings and patrolled streets in parts of the city.

A curfew was imposed in some neighborhoods. In several other areas, shopkeepers closed their shutters and fled markets as panic spread.

India's latest Hindu-Muslim violence in erupted in western Gujarat on Feb. 27 when a Muslim crowd set fire to a train, killing 60 Hindu activists who were returning home from the ancient temple town of Ayodhya in India's north.

The attack provoked retaliatory rampages by Hindu mobs, and at least 723 people have been killed. Muslim homes and businesses have been destroyed.

The roots of the Gujarat violence lie in a Hindu-Muslim dispute over a religious site in Ayodhya, 500 km east of New Delhi. Hindu nationalists want to build a temple on the site of a 16th century mosque that they razed in 1992. Muslims want to rebuild the mosque at the same site. *AP*



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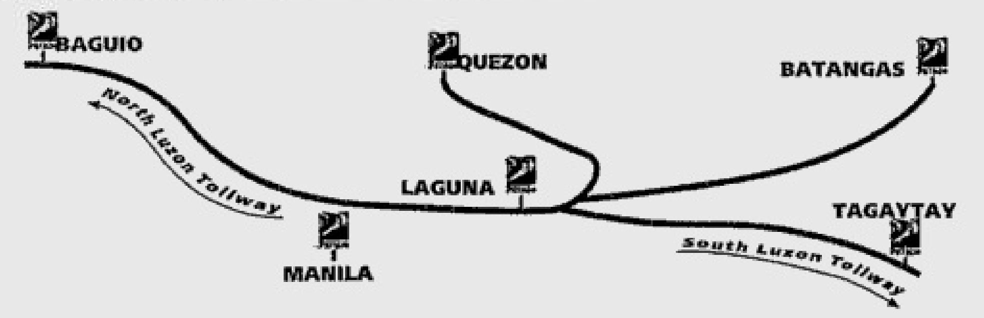

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Pope says priests abusing minors worst form of evil possible

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II, breaking his silence on a wave of child sex scandals in the United States involving Roman Catholic clerics, said on Thursday that Catholic priests abusing minors were carrying out the worst form of evil possible.

Writing in his yearly letter to priests, the Pope said recent grave scandals had cast a "dark shadow of suspicion" over the entire church and on honest priests the world over.

"As priests, we are personally and profoundly afflicted by the sins of some of our brothers who have betrayed the grace of ordination in succumbing even to the most grievous forms of the mystery of evil at work in the world," he said.

The Pope had spoken out against pedophilia before, but his words were eagerly awaited in the United States, where the scandals have touched two of the most senior cardinals—Bernard Law of Boston and Edward Egan of New York.

Both men, accused by critics of mishandling abuse cases, were appointed by the Pope, who is said to hold them in high esteem.

In a statement issued in Boston, Law said he welcomed the Pope's comments.

"I am most grateful to the Holy Father for this reflection on the Priest as minister of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and for the sensitive and helpful way he addresses the situation that has so absorbed us," Law said.

The Archdiocese of New York had no immediate comment.

This time, the Pontiff addressed the issue in one paragraph of the 22-page letter and did not use the word pedophilia.

But Vatican sources said the comments were a clear response to demands that he speak out about scandals, particularly in the United States, where the church is accused of concealing them.

The Pope said the Catholic Church wanted to show its concern for victims and to "respond in truth and justice to each of these painful situations."

"Grave scandal is caused, with the result that a dark shadow of suspicion is cast over all the fine priests who perform their ministry with honesty and integrity and often with heroic self-sacrifice," he said.

The Pope said priests had to overcome human weakness by committing themselves more fully to the search for holiness.

The scandal in the United States has taken on such proportions that even President Bush weighed in recently, saying he was confident the church would "clean up its business and do the right thing."

There have been calls for Law and Egan to resign, but a Vatican cardinal presenting the Pope's letter said the Pontiff was "supportive" of church leaders caught up in the scandal.

Church sources said critics of how the church has handled the scandal were bound to be disappointed by the indirect nature of the Pope's condemnation.

Some had called on the Vatican to fire cardinals who had been touched by the scandal or to start its own investigation.

Instead of answering eight specific questions put by reporters about the church and pedophilia at a Vatican news conference, Cardinal Dario Castrillon Hoyos, head of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy, read a two-page statement.

He said sexual abuse was the product of modern culture, where sexual liberties had influenced priests too. The cardinal said the church had not neglected priestly pedophilia.

Hoyos refused to answer specific questions on the United States, but pointed to a US study saying about 3 percent of US priests had a tendency to abuse minors and 0.3 percent actually did so. *Reuters*

"I'd Rather Show My Buns Than Wear Fur"
—Charlotte Ross, NYPD Blue
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ANIMAL LOVER REUTERS

Charlotte Ross, who plays a police detective on the television show "NYPD Blue," appears in this ad for the animal rights group, People for the Ethical Treatment for Animals. The ad, photographed by Robert Sebree, is part of PETA's "Rather Go Naked Than Wear Fur" series.

Millions said at risk from dirty water

LONDON—Lack of sanitation will kill 20 million of the world's poorest children over the next decade unless governments take urgent action, a report said on Friday.

The Human Waste report by British development agencies Tearfund and WaterAid said lack of basic sanitation in large parts of the developing world produced a fertile breeding ground for otherwise preventable diseases.

"People suffering from water-borne diseases occupy half the world's hospital beds," it said, adding that in China, India and Indonesia the death rate from diarrheal diseases was twice that from HIV/AIDS.

Published to coincide with United Nations World Water Day, the report said 2.4 billion people—or 40 percent of the world's population—were without adequate sanitation.

"World governments have virtually ignored the provision of sanitation for the world's poorest people when setting goals for poverty reduction," said Tearfund's Joanne Green.

"But if they agreed to spend 11 billion pounds ($15.7 billion) a year—the same amount that Europeans and Americans spend on dog food—water-related disease around the globe could be halved," she added in a statement.

The report said nearly 6,000 children died each day from conditions like diarrhea caused by a lack of clean water and adequate toilet facilities.

The report said governments faced "an historic opportunity" to tackle the issue of poor sanitation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in August, and urged Britain to use the occasion to push for urgent global action.

"Major progress toward reducing world poverty will falter until water and sanitation problems are urgently tackled," said WaterAid's Stephen Turner.

The report urged governments to promote and secure a global agreement and action plan to halve the number of people without adequate sanitation by 2015, and for everyone by 2025. *Reuters*

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Poverty, no access to medical care abet TB spread, says CDC

ATLANTA—US health officials on Thursday said the increased presence of tuberculosis among foreign-born residents in the United States highlighted a need to control the infectious disease worldwide.

Tuberculosis, a communicable disease that causes lesions of the lung and other body parts, is a leading cause of death among adults. About 2 million people globally die of tuberculosis each year, and an estimated 2 billion people—one-third of the world's population—have the bacteria that cause the disease.

The disease, which is caused by prolonged exposure to an infected person and can be spread through the air after infected people cough, can be treated with drugs and therapy. Its symptoms can include a cough that does not go away, fatigue, weight loss and fever.

To mark World TB Day, which is March 24, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released two reports that show poverty and lack of access to medical care remain obstacles to controlling the disease.

Kenneth Castro, director of the CDC's tuberculosis elimination program, said the number of new TB cases in the United States fell an average of 7 percent a year from 1992 to 2000. But in 2001, the rate of decline fell to just 2 percent.

"While this single yearly change does not constitute a trend, it provides an early warning of the possible stagnation of recent process toward the elimination of tuberculosis," Castro said.

The CDC said half of all tuberculosis cases in the United States occur among people born in other countries. A study in India, whose people account for nearly 10 percent of US tuberculosis cases, showed poverty was a major obstacle to eliminating the disease. *Reuters*

Even in sea of shredding, Enron papers drew notice

HOUSTON—Document shredding was a 38-ton-a-year operation at accounting firm Andersen's Houston office, but even so, the woman in charge knew something was up when some 20 trunks of Enron-related papers were sent to their ruin.

Sharon Thibaut, the supervisor of records at the auditor's Houston office, said in a March 13 deposition that the spate of Enron-related documents hurriedly sent to her in late October for destruction was an uncommon occurrence.

Thibaut's deposition, given in a huge class action suit against Enron Corp. and Andersen, shows the speed with which Andersen moved to destroy Enron-related records after a US Securities and Exchange Commission investigation into Enron became public on Oct. 23.

That destruction led the US justice department to file a single felony charge of obstruction of justice. The auditor, its survival at stake, pleaded not guilty on Wednesday.

Thibaut said that on either Oct. 24 or Oct. 25, an Enron engagement team member named Eric Tipton called and asked her to send several trunks over to the team's off-site office.

"And I joked with him and said 'This isn't good because whenever I send you empty trunks you send us shredding.' And he said, 'That's exactly what's going to happen,'" Thibaut said.

Tipton's request for a few trunks was common, but Thibaut said it was apparent later that day that it was quite uncommon. The Enron team had called another department asking for even more trunks. Ultimately, she said, about 25 trunks went over and were returned to the small room where Andersen shredded documents.

The contents of 18 to 20 trunks, each of which could hold about 45 kg of paper, were destroyed.

"It was not uncommon to have pressure from Enron," Thibaut said, referring to the Andersen team that serviced Enron. "That was just the typical way that Enron did business.

"But it was a much larger volume," she said of the late October request. The hurried nature and large scale of the request caused "general aggravation" among the support staff, she said. *Reuters*

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western Visayas and the province of Mindoro and Palawan will experience rains with gusty winds. The rest of Southern Luzon, the rest of Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers.

source: pagasa

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Hi32° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 27° Lo 14°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 19°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 21°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 21°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 20°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains and Gusty Winds	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Roxas	Rains and Gusty Winds	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/23/02

Iloilo starts building wall for World War II heroes

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The names of 1,424 men and women in Panay, Romblon and Guimaras who died fighting during World War II will be enshrined in a granite "Wall of Memory."

The Sixth Military District Veterans Association has started the construction of the Wall of Memory, a 14-meter long polished granite slab that will contain the list of casualties of the military district from 1941 to 1945.

A time capsule containing the names was lowered on March 18 during the 57th anniversary celebration of the Victory Day in Panay, Romblon and Guimaras at the Balantang Memorial Cemetery National Shrine here.

The memorial was well received by close to a thousand veterans and their families who attended the celebration.

Ricardo Hechanova, chair of the rites committee, said the memory wall would be the first and probably the only edifice to contain a huge list of casualties of World War II in the country.

Retired Col. Cesar Hechanova, trustee of the veterans association and Ricardo's brother, said the memory wall will "enhance the meaning" of the shrine, which contains 150 tombs including one at the center of the shrine honoring the "Unknown Soldier."

The memory wall was proposed by the veterans association with the support of the Military Shrine Service in 1998.

The National Historical Institute provided the engineering drawings for the wall. Last year, the defense department appropriated P350,000 for its construction this year.

Ricardo said the memory wall was inspired by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC.

The front panel will be inscribed with names of the veterans. The back will contain a relief tableau of local scenes during World War II.

The Hechanova brothers said so much effort went into preparing the list of the 1,424 names to be etched on the wall.

"It was not an easy task to cull names where duplications, wrong spelling and difficulty in interpreting handwritten notes occur," said Cesar.

The names were retrieved from official reports of US wartime records, and supplementary reports from the field and works of historians from the Philippines.

Cesar said the list does not include casualties during the first bombing of Iloilo City, where, amid chaos, an undetermined number of reservists were killed while reporting for duty on Dec. 18, 1941, 11 days after Pearl Harbor was bombed.

He added some casualties were "reported as numbers without names to go with them."

Rex Salvilla, a lawyer and historian, said it would be a fitting tribute to Panay-Romblon guerrillas, which is "considered to be one of the best organized in the world."

Cebu journalists fined for contempt

By Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A regional trial court judge has ordered four women journalists of a local daily to pay a fine of P5,000 each after finding them guilty of indirect contempt for publishing a story linking him to an alleged bribe attempt.

In his order, Judge Fortunato de Gracia yesterday said his decision to impose fines on Cebu Daily News publisher Eileen Mangubat, editor-in-chief Thea Riñen, news editor Piedad Gonzalez and reporter Suzzane Salva was "a veritable tap on a wrist."

But, he said that this should "serve as a cautionary advise to the respondents to tame their zeal in giving free reign to their imagination in information dissemination, to scrupulously adhere to the Journalistic Canons, and to give every man his due."

Deolito Alvarez, co-legal counsel of the four journalists, said they would appeal the decision before the Court of Appeals.

"We understand that Judge De Gracia was emotionally involved in his case," he said. "Maybe it is better to elevate the matter to the higher court for it to judge the issues."

De Gracia charged the four journalists with indirect contempt after he felt maligned by the CDN front-page article entitled "Judge bribed?" on Feb. 28.

He also lamented that the paper's ear, which showed the paper's maskot Siloy uttering "*Disgrasya?*," was "an unmistakable and dismaying comic parody" of his surname to subject him to ridicule.

But the four journalists maintained that the article was not contumacious because it was "fair and true report, made in good faith, without any comments or remarks of an official proceeding, which is not confidential in nature."

Their legal counsel Maria Jane Paredes said the story fell under the category of qualified privileged communication as it was based on the testimony of assistant prosecutor Mary Ann Castro during an inquiry conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman-Visayas on the alleged bribery attempt at the City Prosecutor's Office.

Castro is among the three prosecutors assigned to handle the illegal drugs case filed against three suspected members of the Hong Kong triad before De Gracia's sala.

During the Feb. 27 inquiry, the CDN quoted Castro as saying that lawyer Gines Abellana gave her P10,000 in exchange for going easy on the motion to bail filed by the accused.

Castro had also reportedly claimed that Abellana urged her to accept the envelope containing the money as he had allegedly approached De Gracia over the matter and that in fact, he was on his way to the judge.

During the hearing on March 15, Paredes told the court that the English translation of the Cebuano word *disgrasya* is not disgrace but "accident."

In his order released yesterday, De Gracia just brushed aside the arguments of the respondents.

"In its return of the show cause order and repeated in their oral discourse, (the) respondents insist (sic) that the headline was a fair comment and cited same such other inanities that merit scant consideration, it at all (sic)," De Gracia said.

He said the respondents still used the headline "Judge bribed?" when the journalists knew that Castro's statement was double hearsay and was not verified and that Abellana had belied the allegations.

The judge also pointed out that he was not available for comment at that time because he was attending a seminar in Manila.

The respondents also knew that the motion for bail of the accused, which was the main consideration for the bribe, had already been denied by the court, the judge said.

"Mayhaps (sic), with the passage of time, the snide remarks and derisive smirks will end but the harm has been perpetrated and done," De Gracia said.

Pampanga town officials question release of report on milk poisoning

MINALIN, Pampanga—Education officials in Central Luzon and local executives in this town reported not receiving a copy of the Department of Education report that initially ruled out liability for Alaska Milk Corp. (AMC) in the alleged food poisoning of some 200 pupils in this town last March 11.

Vilma Labrador, DepEd regional director, said she has yet to receive the investigation report prepared by Magdalene Portia Cariaga, coordinator of the DepEd's project School Milk, which is partly funded by Senate President Franklin Drilon.

The AMC on Thursday based its press release on the report, which is dated March 13, to claim that DepEd had traced the incident to milk intolerance and not food poisoning.

The report said it was "highly probable that most of the pupils exhibited milk intolerance, which is common to Asian people especially to non-milk drinkers."

Whose report?

It was not known if the DepEd officially released the report to the AMC or if Education Secretary Raul Roco endorsed it as an official report.

Cariaga is said to be on leave. Other officials of the project were not available for comments.

The reactions of education officials in Pampanga to the report were not known. They began a Lenten retreat on Friday.

Santiago Polido, AMC corporate affairs director, said he obtained a copy early this week. The report said that the incident "cannot be totally attributed to milk poisoning."

It said this can "only be proven after the microbiological test has been released by the Bureau of Food and Drugs Administration."

It also recommended "further investigation" even after the BFAD had released its findings.

Labrador said she was placing more importance on the results of the investigation of the Department of Health in Central Luzon and on the BFAD findings.

Intolerance

However, she agreed with Cariaga's view on milk intolerance, citing a research done on the same health issue among Asian people.

Ricardo Sibug, DepEd regional director, said he asked a local nutritionist to "strike out" in another report that part on milk intolerance.

"I believe that there really is such a trend but I'd rather that this must be proven in the case of the Minalin children. This aspect is inconclusive for now," Sibug told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

Mayor Edgar Flores said AMC's Thursday press release and its use of the DepEd report to "bail itself out of the mess" was "self-serving."

He said he was going to demand for an official copy of Cariaga's report.

Last Tuesday, Polido said preliminary investigation by the company showed that teachers sold and served hotcakes, buns and pizza to the students before or after they were fed with milk.

Flores said teachers were not taking very kindly Alaska's statements on their responsibility in the incident.

"Shut up"

He advised Alaska officials to "shut up, stop issuing self-serving statements and wait for BFAD findings."

Senate President Franklin Drilon had apologized for the mass food poisoning and promised the parents of the children that he would have the poisoning investigated.

Drilon said the program was his and that it was meant to provide free milk to schoolchildren in rural areas.

Packs of the chocolate milk had the name of Drilon emblazoned on them.

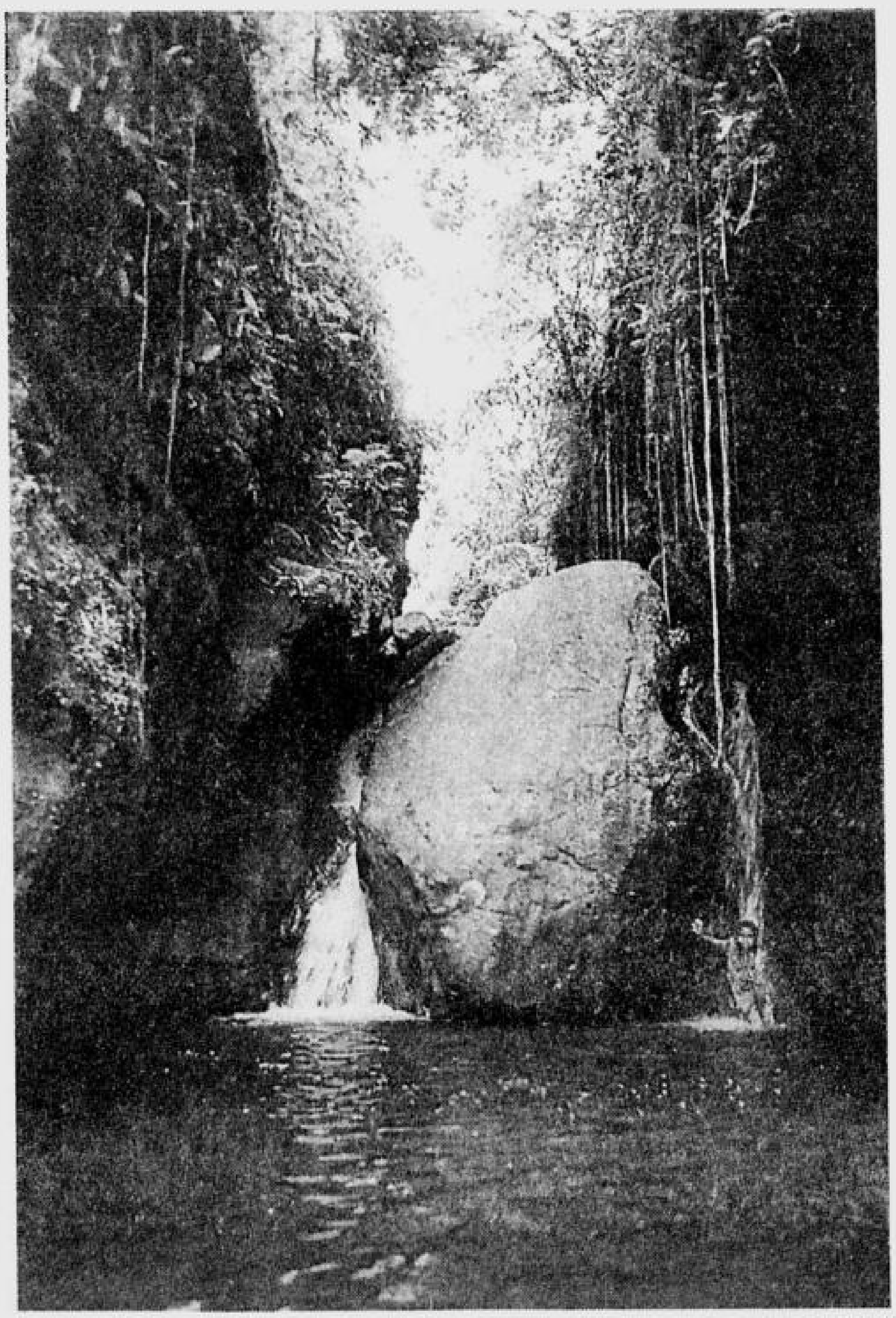
The parents of the children said they were planning to file a class suit, however, against the AMC for the incident.

Polido said there was no basis to file a class suit.

The AMC said it earlier sent teams to test the quality of the chocolate milk but that the milk products were in good quality.

A statement quoting Cariaga said the number of children who were brought to hospitals grew after parents and teachers went into panic.

Cariaga was quoted as saying the proximity of the schools where no child was poisoned to the schools were the poisoning took place "may have contributed to the panic reaction of school officials, parents and schoolchildren." ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***



A SECRET PLACE

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Residents of the area say only the Aetas know how to get to these falls in Mabalacat, Pampanga, from which Aetas draw their drinking water and in which the tribal people, like this Aeta woman, bathe.

'Lumad' army claims abducting 8 DENR workers

BUTUAN CITY—The Bungkatol Liberation Army yesterday claimed it has abducted at least eight employees of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Sibagat, Agusan del Sur.

The BLA, composed of Manobo, Higaonon, Mamanwa, Talaandig, Banwaon, Mandaya and Umayam tribesmen, said the abduction was part of their war against the government for oppressing members of the indigenous communities and the non-implementation of the Indigenous People's Rights Act or the Ipra Law.

Datu Belu, commander of the BLA, said the captives were taken from Barangay Padiaay in Sibagat on Thursday morning.

He said the eight DENR employees were conducting an environmental survey and a forest management seminar when they were taken.

Datu Belu said they decided to abduct the employees to press the government to abandon the Ifma contract it entered with at least five mining companies in Agusan del Sur.

The contract, approved by Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, covers at least 128,000 hectares of the *lumads'* ancestral lands.

Formed in 2000, the Bungkatol Liberation Army serves as the armed wing of the Bungkatol Liberation Front (Bulif), which is based in Esperanza, Agusan del Sur.

Bulif said it is fighting for the establishment of the Bungkatol Autonomous Regional Government.

Bungkatol means the "golden rule" in the *lumad* dialect.

"We demand the cancellation of the Ifma, swift granting of ancestral domain certificates and economic aid to our people," Datu Belu said. The captives would be freed if the demands were met, he said.

But Benjamin Tumaliwan, regional executive director of DENR in the Caraga region, said the alleged abduction did not occur. ***Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Gov claims Bin Laden met with MILF in 1997

DAVAO CITY—Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol yesterday said Osama bin Laden met with Moro Islamic Liberation Front chair Hashim Salamat and other officials of the rebel group sometime in 1997.

Piñol would not identify his source, but insisted his information was reliable and that he would not have revealed Bin Laden's visit if the source lacked credibility.

He said the military's intelligence network must have known about the visit and that he could not understand "why they are hiding this."

Bin Laden allegedly stayed in Camp Abubakar for two days with Salamat and Salamat's senior religious adviser, Abu Halil Yahya, where he was briefed about the MILF's capability.

After the meeting, Piñol said, the MILF launched a series of atrocities including the bombing of a ferry in Ozamiz City in February 2000. At least 32 people were killed in that attack.

Piñol said it only proved that the MILF forms part of Bin Laden's al-Qaida Network.

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said the MILF has no ties with the al-Qaida or any terrorist organization.

Piñol said it would not be difficult for anybody to establish the link.

He said the MILF uses the same weapons used by the Taliban, the former rulers of Afghanistan, which enjoyed Bin Laden's support.

Piñol said he does not intend to derail the ongoing peace negotiations between the government peace panel and the MILF when he decided to reveal Bin Laden's visit.

"The intention of my revelation is to forewarn the government to go slow in absolving the MILF of any link with al-Qaida, (and for) the MILF to look into their ranks on how deep their members are with al-Qaida," he said.

But Kabalu dismissed Piñol's claim as part of efforts to press the government into extending the Balikatan to other parts of Mindanao. ***Joel Escovilla and Ayan Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Panay mountains host good vs evil rituals

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

SCORES of *babaylan* (faith healers) all over Panay and elsewhere are expected to meet somewhere in the six balding mountains of Panay next week to perform their annual rituals to ward off evil and pray for the prosperity of their communities.

Called "*samba*," the rituals are performed during Holy Week to ask for rain, good harvest, good health and prevent sickness. The *babaylan* are expected to chant, pray, dance and offer pigs as sacrifices in caves on the spirit-filled mountains, said to be linked to each other by subterranean caves and an underground passage to Mt. Kanlaon in Negros Occidental.

These mountains are Punta Hagdan (Dao, Antique), Mt. Aliwliw (Dao, Antique), Punta Nasog (Anini-y, Antique), Mt. Igbiga (San Joaquin, Iloilo), Mt. Balutinaw (near Mt. Baloy, Central Panay) and Mt. Inturayan (Miga-ao, Iloilo).

Aside from hosting *samba* rituals, these places yield medicinal herbs, barks and roots which the *babaylan* and their initiates gather from Holy Wednesday to Good Friday, when they are said to be more potent.

Accounts of such places were in a book "The Enduring Ma-aram Tradition," written by Dr. Alicia Magos, anthropologist from the University of the Philippines in the Visayas.

Magos retrieved the tradition of *ma-aram*, commonly known as *babaylan*, in a remote village in Antique, which started more than a millennium ago but continues to this day.

The spirit world

The entrance to the six sacred mountains is at Punta Hagdan, which is on the eastern shorelines of Antique. Ancient *babaylan* said the six mountains and Mt. Kanlaon in Negros, correspond to the seven caves where an "*engkantu*" keeps wayward souls.

An *engkantu* is a malevolent spirit that villagers often encounter because they inhabit places often visited by humans. They could be "*kapre*" (giant) that inhabit trees, "*murokpok*" (a hobbit-like spirit) that roam the hills or "*tamawo*" (human-sized creatures) that often court pretty women in the village. They could be appeased or driven away by rituals performed by a *babaylan*.

If an *engkantu* captures a *dungan* or lost soul, the person would get sick. Magos wrote that it was easier for a *babaylan* to retrieve a soul if it is kept in the first, second and third caves. But it is extremely difficult if the *engkantu* keeps it in the seventh cave. Only a high-caliber *babaylan* can retrieve it because a ferocious dog, also an *engkantu*, guards the cave.

The springs in the mountains are where the *kalag*, or the souls of the dead, gather after a long journey starting from the nearest spring near the village of the dead person. The journey ends at Moro-boro Spring in Central Panay, where the souls take their final bath before they go to heaven.

The initiates or the new *babaylan* would also trek the mountains to fortify herself or himself, or hone the skills in challenging the environment and evil spirits.

The twin-spirits, *dungan*, or its other variance, is a popular belief among the early Visayans that many still hold. Also important to the beliefs of the pre-Christian worldview, which survives to this day, is that all things in the human world are subject to powers, spirits and deities in the spirit world.

Spirits are everywhere—rocks, trees, fields, hills, mountains and even in the house and under the stairs, among others. The spirits communicate to humans through the *babaylan*.

Four pillars

At the foothills near the six Panay mountains are said to be the "Four Pillars" of the world, said Magos. These are in the towns of Dao, San Remigio in Antique, Anini-y and Tubungan, Iloilo.

The site in San Remegio is some 7 kilometers outside the *poblacion* (town center) near a spirit-inhabited cave while that in Dao is at Danawan, a far-flung community beside a spring. In Anini-y, the pillar is in Punta Nasug, a mountain near the shore. The site in Tubungan is on the mountain of Balabago, where a similarly named stream meanders through.

The famous *babaylan* progeny that makes a regular pilgrimage to the hills in Balabago belongs to Estrella Bangotbanwa, who is believed to be the progenitor of present-day *babaylan* or *ma-aram* and their initiates.

Bangotbanwa is a well-known *babaylan* in the 19th century in Iloilo and Antique.

Ma. Milagros Geremia-Lachica, a writer who gathered oral accounts of Bangotbanwa, wrote that Bangotbanwa could summon rain and strong winds by loosening her hair and raising her hands. She could also make water sprout from a rock at the strike of a spear.

Bangotbanwa, the legends went, was able to save the town of San Joaquin from hunger and thirst during a three-year drought by a ritual, which she did with the permission of the priest.

Bangotbanwa ordered seven black pigs to be butchered and covered with black cloth. She then took a live pig, brought it to the town plaza, pressed its mouth to the ground until it gave a loud, prolonged squeal. Suddenly, the sky became dark, heavy rains fell and flood followed. It was after that that she earned her name Bangotbanwa, meaning "the refuge of the people in times of crisis."

Don't judge

The rituals and healing herbs of the *babaylan* are important in keeping the community in a state of balance, Magos said. The rituals, she said, are performed to fortify the soul of the person as well as treat illnesses caused by supernatural beings and normal causes like fatigue or over exposure to the elements.

These ways of healing are important in rural communities that have no access to medical services in the lowland. Families would take pains to spend for and go through rituals because of the high cost of caring for a sick member, whose labor is needed in the fields, according to Magos. "The rituals keep life in the balance," she said.

Fr. Meliton Oso, head of the Social Action Center in the Archdiocese of Jaro, said Catholics should not pass judgement on those who believe and practice the *babaylan* tradition.

He said the Catholic faithful have yet to fathom beliefs that are rooted in the Filipino culture.

"The Church does not condemn what it cannot understand," said Father Oso.

Bantayan, an island where Holy Week is best seen

A CARROZA taking part in Holy Week rites on Bantayan features the crucifixion of Christ.

VIOLA PACILAN

By Marvi A. Gil
Cebu City

EVERY Holy Week, droves of people head for a tiny island north of Cebu City. Foreign and domestic tourists outnumber locals, resorts and hostels quickly fill up, and tent cities sprout on endless stretches of white beaches.

The sudden influx of people is difficult to understand for those unfamiliar with Bantayan Island's history. Unlike the top two destinations during the Lenten season, Boracay and Hong Kong, Bantayan does not have shopping malls or the rowdy nightlife Filipinos look for to escape a heavy and solemn Lenten atmosphere.

But for those who seek a truly Filipino Lenten experience, the island is considered to have the most spectacular Holy Week in the Philippines.

The Bantayan Parish in Bantayan town, the commercial center of the three municipalities on the island, was established on June 11, 1580 under Rev. Fr. Pedro de Campos. The parish is the oldest in Cebu province and has one of the few well-preserved and centuries-old limestone churches.

The Saints Peter and Paul Church has stood the test of time and even survived torching by Moros in the 1600s. During the Moro attack, more than 800 Bantayan folk were taken captive and sold as slaves to rich Muslims in Mindanao.

When the Augustinian friars arrived, the people were already practicing fixed religious beliefs. Cholera and smallpox epidemics from 1880 to 1890 were attributed to evil spirits who were said to poisoned the wells. Charms, rituals and healing potions were directed toward eliminating the forces of evil. It could be as simple as burnt offerings made at the foot of ancient trees or as complicated as memorized chants passed on from generation to generation for the making of amulets.

The marriage of Catholic catechism and indigenous ceremonies produced the same brand of Catholicism found in the rest of the century. However, it is in the practice of Lent traditions that Bantayanons veer away from the norm.

Lenten feast

While the rest of the country fast or abstain from eating pork, beef and chicken, Bantayanons prepare a feast for Holy Week guests. Locals lay out a spread of tasty *lechon* (roasted pig), sizzling *sisig*, and other fiesta fare.

The practice of serving meat during Lent is a direct consequence of fishermen's refusal to go out to sea during these days. Fishing and other forms of strenuous activity are frowned upon because any injury, especially those during Holy Thursday and Good Friday, is believed to be lethal or may take a longer time to heal. All other forms of commercial activity also cease.

Families keep to themselves for prayer and reflection. They also use this time to decorate the famous Bantayan carrozas that come out during Holy Thursday and Good Friday processions.

Unlike the usual procession carrozas, those in Bantayan are so large that both sides of the carts barely clear the sides of houses along the streets. It takes more than 30 men to pull a carroza. At least 15 family carrozas participate in the processions.

Families also try to outdo each other, spending at least P100,000 for decorations that often do not reach the Church where the procession ends. People race each other in stripping off pieces of the carrozas in the belief that the flowers or ribbons are blessed and have the power to heal when soaked in water. The water is often rubbed on an aching body part or ingested by an ill person.

Each carroza also has life-sized statues depicting the passion and death of Jesus Christ. These statues have been passed on from generation to generation. Of note is one owned by the Mabugat family (one member is famous jazz singer Verni Varga). It is a statue of a grieving Mother Mary cradling the body of Jesus. Made entirely of ivory, it was the inheritance of the Mabugat patriarch who chose it over hectares of land.

Papal dispensation

As the fame of Bantayan carrozas spread, more and more people visited the island during the Holy Week.

This became a problem for local residents. Since the fishermen were unwilling to fish, and transportation to the Cebu mainland was unreliable, they were faced with having many guests but few provisions. The only abundant food source was livestock. So, despite strict Catholic restrictions against eating meat during Holy Week, residents had to serve this to guests.

In the 1800s, Pope George granted a Papal dispensation allowing Bantayanons to continue this practice.

To this day, Bantayan families still prepare fiesta fare and one sees an increase in barbecue vendors lining the streets just before the 6 p.m. processions.

The procession itself is unusual. Scattered in the crowd following the carrozas are children dressed as saints. This is because when children get sick, parents make promises to their special saints so the child gets well. The most popular *panaad* or promise is dressing up children as saints for the procession.

Tourist destination

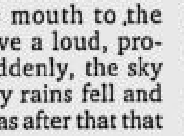
Currently, prominent community leaders have banded together to form the Bantayan Tourism Commission. Headed by Susan Otero-Pacheco, the commission is banking on the island's growing popularity as a Lenten destination. However, they hope to move beyond seasonal tourism and have been marketing the white sand beaches in the municipality of Sta. Fe as well as the various natural caves scattered all over the island.

Now, there are eight existing Class A resorts, 12 restaurants and two discos on the island with a total of 100 rooms. However, during Lent, these fill up. Reservations are made a year before. Visitors who do not know anyone on Bantayan are advised to bring tents that they can pitch on beaches in front of resorts for minimal fees. The fee is used to pay for garbage collection and keeping toilets clean.

Residents are bullish about their tourism prospects. Small airlines now fly to the island and additional ferry trips that would make the crossing between Hagnaya, Cebu and Bantayan are planned.

More than anything else, though, many locals cross their fingers and wish that the silence and solemnity of their Holy Week will remain unaffected by crowds of rowdy tourists.

A busy women's month in Bacolod City



LUCID INTERVA

Rowena V. Guanzon

WOMEN's month in Bacolod City was a busy one.

The PNP held a summit for its Women's and Children's Desk (WCD). The National Prosecutors' League also held its summit.

The women's group Gabriela held a march around the plaza and rallied against globalization.

The St. Scholastica's Academy had a forum on women's and human rights.

During a rally calling for then President Joseph Estrada to resign, Grade 6 girls were there. The parents, voluntarily or reluctantly, were also in the rally, although in their vehicles.

St. Scholastica starts them young, and the school director, Sr. Sally Fajardo, should be congratulated before she retires. Girls should know their rights at a young age because when they become adults, they will experience discrimination and abuse.

They experience abuse and discrimination now.

I had to tell the faculty members though, that the word "freshman" is incorrect for girls and maybe they can change it.

While the WCD summit focused on how law enforcers could better improve services to women, the public prosecutors not once mentioned the word "gender" in their conference. I think they totally missed out on what month of the year it was. They can do better next year by inserting at least a gender sensitivity seminar.

We continue to face the problems of bias on the part of many public prosecutors when we file rape cases. When they think that the complainant is a prostituted woman, they dismiss the case, forgetting altogether that even if their belief was true, prostitutes, and even wives, under the Anti-Rape Law of 1995, are raped.

* * *

In an art exhibit of paintings of women, Charlie Co said he was so moved by a "Probe Team" story on comfort women that immediately after watching it, he painted a woman with blood in her thighs, with a Japanese flag behind her. It is now in a gallery in Manila.

* * *

During the WCD summit, a consultation was held with the Women's Legal Bureau Inc. as facilitators. WCD officers, police inspectors, barangay officials, representatives of non-government organizations, Board Member Cora Diploma and Cadiz Prosecutor Frances Guanzon were there.

The WCD officers talked about biases against women and the humiliation they suffer in police stations. Many policemen who are not investigating the case subject the complainants to questions, such as "Were you really raped?"

WCD officers lament their lack of resources and some of them get sued for doing their job.

In case conferences, the women's desk officer and social workers talked about their problems. They wished that all cases of violence against women and children could be handled with better coordination and support between them, the community, the church and lawyers.

A manual or protocol of the PNP will be a big help to the police and social workers, but the community's help is indispensable. The tapping of communities in the campaign to stop violence against women is a big job, and local governments must take the lead.

This project was planned as a result of the rape cases filed by five girls against Victor Pearson, an American who lived in Ilog, Negros Occidental, for 20 years.

Some local governments such as Pontevedra have formed their council for women. These councils can actively participate in preventing violence against women and girls in their communities and assist the victims.

Director Geary Barias will integrate his "adopt a barangay project" in the PNP's program on violence against women. Each law enforcer will adopt a barangay so that he or she is responsible for mobilizing community support and to help police respond to cases faster.

The PNP should help educate all police personnel on how to handle cases of violence against women properly and become more confident in responding to calls for help.

If you hear a woman being beaten by her spouse or partner and crying for help in a house and you are a law enforcer, should you intervene? How? Should you enter the house?

You should have seen the eagerness of the WCD officer of San Carlos City: "Yes!"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Palace favors 'secret marshals' vs bombers

From page A1

ity for most of the bombs, usually made of rifle grenades with wires and timing devices. The group is seeking a federal form of government in the country.

Another group, the Christian Lumad Nationalist Army (CLNA) and not the Christian Lumad Liberation Army as earlier reported by the police, is claiming responsibility for the bombs found in Cotabato City.

In a manifesto, the CLNA said it was supporting the Macapagal administration, which it called the country's "legitimate government."

The CLNA also advocates the integrity of the republic, and peaceful coexistence among Christians, lumads and other ethnic groups in Mindanao.

Sketches

Director General Leandro Mendoza, PNP chief, said they had come up with sketches of the suspects based on the testimony of people who saw some of those who planted the bombs.

One of the suspects was caught on a railway security camera where one of the bombs was planted. Police are also reviewing Metro Rail Transit's video footage at its stations in Kamuning in Quezon City and Ortigas in Pasig City.

The Metro Manila police chief called on the public to provide the police with information on the suspects.

"If they have any information regarding these suspects, they should call 117 or my cell phone number (09178131310)," said Director Edgar Aglipay, head of the National Capital Region Police Office.

Aglipay said investigators were zeroing in on three groups behind the bomb scare. He declined to identify them.

"We are cross matching our evidence with the evidence that we had gathered before, and we are zeroing in on a number of groups," he said when asked if the suspects belonged to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Moro National Liberation Front or the New People's Army.

Aglipay said that while they were zeroing in on three groups, they were not discounting the involvement of other groups.

Intelligence sources in Camp Crame said they were looking into the possible involvement of the MNLF, MILF and even forces loyal to deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Alliances

These groups have reasons to destabilize the government because Moro leader Nur Misuari and Estrada are now detained while facing criminal charges, according to the sources.

Misuari is detained at Fort Sto. Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, while awaiting his arraignment for rebellion. Estrada, on the other hand, is detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City while undergoing trial for plunder.

The sources said the MILF could have formed an alliance with the MNLF or the MILF with Estrada forces to pursue their common objectives. Meetings between representatives from each group have been monitored in the past weeks, according to the sources.

Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, NPA spokesperson, denied speculations that the rebel group was behind the "bomb scare."

"Our organization has nothing to do with that because it's against our principles," he said in an interview over dzBB. "Our suspicion is that the military instigated this to justify the continued presence of US troops here."

Tiglao expressed doubts that a terrorist group was pushing for federalism. He said he had yet to see anyone willing to "die for, kill for a federalist state."

"It's a stupid kind of goal because a federalist state is merely a political arrangement or political structure," he said. "Nobody has waged a terrorist or guerrilla movement for a parliamentary form of government."

Speculations

With the suspects still unidentified, more groups and legislators are speculating on the motives of those behind the bomb scare.

Manuel Villar, Senate President Pro Tempore, said it was possible that some elements in the government were involved in the bomb scare to justify the presence of American troops in the country for the Balikatan exercises.

Like Villar, the militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya said the bomb scare was meant to condition the minds of the people that draconian measures were needed to fight terrorism and justify the presence of US troops in the country.

"The Palace wants a de facto martial law in place. It scripted the planting and discovery of bombs to convince the public that the threat of terrorism was real, and the presence of more US troops necessary, along with an unstated martial rule, to combat the so-called terrorist groups," Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon said.

Villar did not rule out enemies of the state out to embarrass the government.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said he hoped that police officials were not involved in the new destabilization plot. He said during the Ramos and Estrada administrations, police were involved in destabilization plots.

Sen. Serge Osmeña said the involvement of men in uniform could not be ruled out because the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the PNP were highly politicized.

In the House of Representatives, Bulacan Rep. Willie B. Villarama said the discovery of several bombs not meant to explode was part of a script to "make the role of the military more important."

"This is part of a script to make the Filipinos bend their knees for the military. We are entering a new age of militarization," said Villarama, who once served as chief of staff of Ms Macapagal.

For his part, Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon expressed doubts that people supporting federalism were behind the bomb scare.

"If this is the handiwork of people espousing federalism, the first person they should detain is Nene Pimentel," Macarambon said over the phone.

He was referring to the senator who is at the forefront of a campaign to adopt a federal system of government.

Macarambon said many senators and congressmen, including himself, were supporting federalism. ***With reports from TJ Burgonio, Cynthia Balana, Juliet Javellana and Gerald G. Lacuarta in Manila; and Anthony S. Allada, Charlie C. Señase and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

'Bomb' found in Davao mall

By the PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY— A "bomb" was found outside the Victoria Plaza shopping mall here on Thursday night.

Delfin Sulamin, an announcer of radio station dxOW, claimed that he discovered the "bomb" while walking at the parking lot.

Sulamin said he noticed a suspicious-looking box packed with masking tape and colored wires about 30 meters away from the main entrance of Victoria Plaza.

He said he immediately informed the mall's security guards, who later informed the Sta. Ana police station and the Special Anti-Terrorist Unit (Satu).

PO2 Ferdinand de la Rosa, a Satu bomb squad member, however, said the box did not contain any explosive material. He said the box only had ordinary wires and an alarm clock.

Senior Supt. Wilfredo Garcia, city police chief, said the box was meant to scare the public.

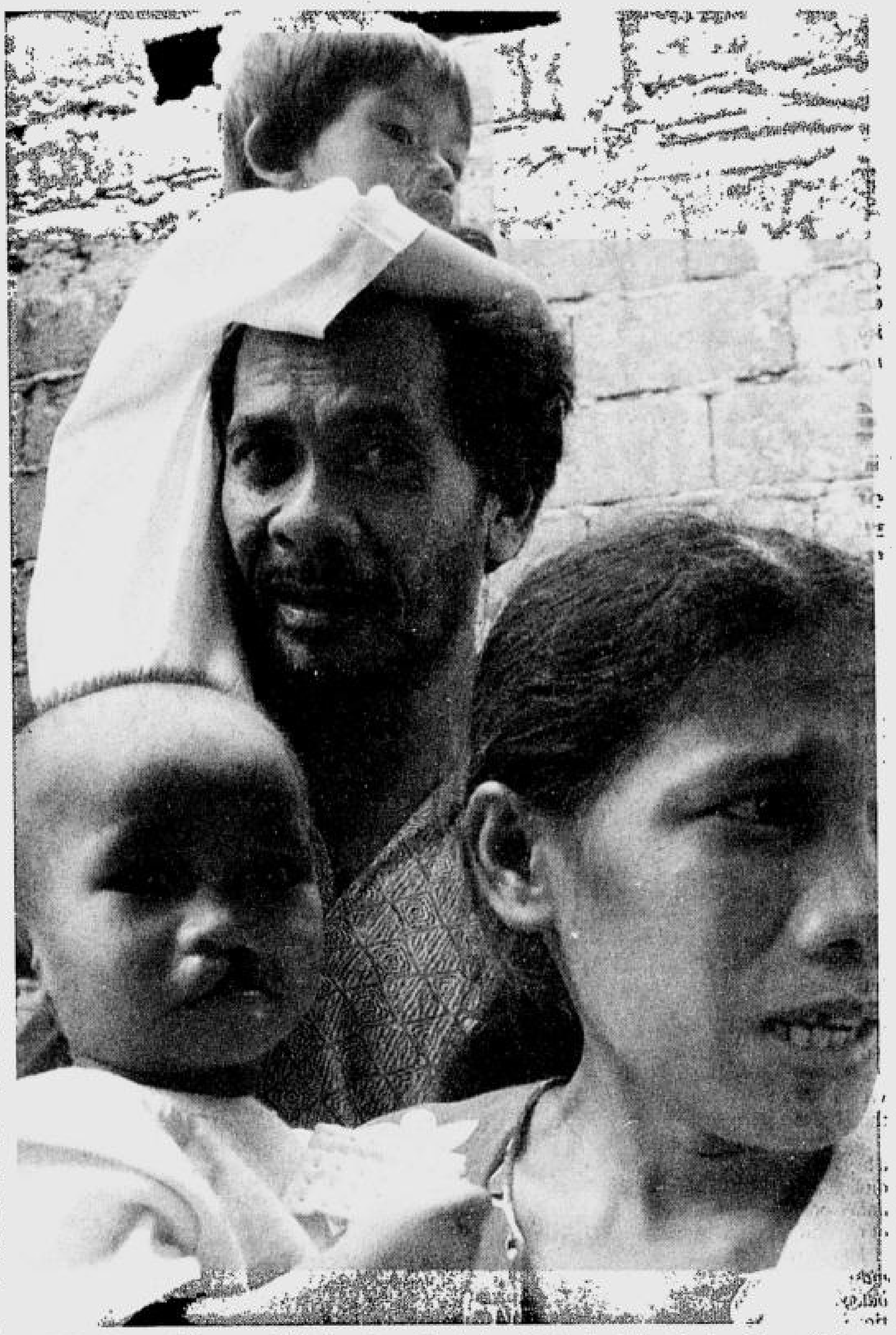
Red alert

Garcia, however, urged the public to be vigilant and report any suspicious-looking objects to authorities. He said the local police were on double red alert.

On Wednesday night, a large can of paint caused panic among residents of Quimpo Boulevard in the city. The residents thought it was a bomb.

In Cotabato City, Mayor Muslimin Sema called on the people behind the planting of "improvised bombs" to be "man enough" and come out in the open so that they could express what they want from the government.

Sema was referring to the Indigenous People Federal Army (Ipfa) and the Christian Lumad Nationalist Army (CLNA), which claimed responsibility for planting two homemade bombs on Thursday. The police were able to defuse the bombs.



FACES of fear of deported Filipinos from Sandakan, Malaysia: What is the future like? Where do they go from here? Here, where they have no home. EDWIN BACASMAS

Nude photo session lands Koreans in jail

From page A1

In a sworn statement, security guard Derick Albina, 31, said he noticed several persons running toward the fort's gate at about 3 p.m. on Thursday. "I (was) then surprised as I was able to see two females who were totally naked/nude," he said. Albina said the two women were posing before their male companions.

He said he then asked the group to stop the photo session because many people had already gathered to see the "scandalous act." The women immediately covered their bodies while their companions removed the film from their camera, which they then placed inside a bag.

Danilo Siaton of the Philippine Tourism Authority said he, too, saw the two naked women posing before their male companions.

But Godwin Manginsay, the Koreans' counsel, said the police failed to recover any picture or video footage to show that his women-clients were naked while being photographed or filmed. He said the allegation that his clients were naked when photographed was disputable, because of an "error in perception." He maintained that his clients were at the Fort San Pedro to take pictures of the historic site, just like any other tourists.

Manginsay also noted that the women immediately stopped "whatever they were doing" after they were reprimanded by the security guard.

Assistant City Prosecutor Rudolf Joseph Carillo agreed, declaring he did not find probable cause for a case involving a violation of Presidential Decree 969, which bans the exhibition of nude or naked bodies.

In his order, Carillo found that aside from the cameras and film, there was no other material evidence against the respondents presented during yesterday's inquest proceeding. "The arresting officers said that the respondents immediately covered themselves when told to do so," he said. "To the mind of this investigating officer, no criminal or malicious intent can be readily perceived from the circumstances.

The Koreans' actions, he added, may be attributed to a difference in cultural traits.

Substantial evidence

In an interview, Carillo said there was no substantial evidence to show that the women were indeed naked during the photo session. He noted that during the inquest proceeding, Albina testified that the women were *"murag naghubo* (appeared naked)."

The respondents also testified that they were not naked but were merely wearing skin-toned underwear, he said. Cultural differences could also be a factor, he added, because the women were surprised when they were reprimanded by Albino and immediately did what they were told to do.

Su and Yoo are expected to return to Seoul, South Korea, along with their seven male companions, following the dismissal of their case. Manginsay said his clients would leave on Sunday.

In the police station, the men identified themselves as Young Chul-choi, 32; Jae Park-hung, 32; Kyong Il-yoon, 31; Wan Hyuk-chang, 32; Ja Jong-hong, 26; Kyu Hyun-ha, 23 and Won Muk-lim, 35. They listed Gunjong-dung 369 Seoul, South Korea, as their address. ***With a report from AFP***

Rags to riches to rags again

From page A1

answering all 16 questions correctly and winning 1 million baht ($23,100).

Red-faced organizers quickly apologized when it was found that technicians had accidentally plugged the wrong cable into her computer monitor, feeding her the correct answers highlighted in green.

"The show organizers told me technical glitches in their computer system gave me the right answers and they could not award me the jackpot," Lertrak told a radio show on Friday.

"They told me to play again. I didn't mind, since I didn't want them to get in trouble," she said.

During the replay, Lertrak answered six questions correctly, winning 25,000 baht.

The original show and the re-recording, which airs on Thailand's Channel 3 next month, were done on Thursday.

"Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" originated from Britain and has local editions in nearly 40 countries, including the United States, Canada, Australia, Holland, Russia, Malaysia, India, Denmark, South Africa and Japan. **Reuters**

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US to spend $60M for roads, services, says Gloria

**By Dona Z. Pazzibugan
and Carlito Pablo**

APART from bringing in more troops, the United States wants to build more infrastructure projects in Basilan worth around $60 million under an "expanded" Balikatan 02-1, President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson said yesterday.

Rigoberto Tiglao said the United States had offered to lengthen Basilan's only airstrip, construct roads and medical facilities, and perform more medical services to the residents in some sort of a "mini-development plan" for the island.

He said the United States wanted a "major enhancement" of Balikatan 02-1 so it would be "geared toward civic action and infrastructure work."

"You can imagine the impact of $60 million in services and infrastructure for an area as small as Basilan," he said. "It would mean a major economic development program for the island."

Tiglao, however, stressed that the Philippine government was still "seriously studying" the proposal.

He said the proposal would have to be reviewed by the Departments of Health, Social Welfare, Public Works, and National Defense, as well as the Armed Forces, which had jurisdiction over the exercise.

Tiglao also reiterated that the agreement governing RP-US military exercises was "only on a bilateral level."

Thus, he said, the US proposal to merge the upcoming Balikatan 02-2 with the American-initiated multinational military exercise dubbed "Team Challenge" would have to be evaluated first by the government, particularly the Department of Foreign Affairs, and consultations made with countries being considered to participate.

As far as the Philippines is concerned, "we see (Balikatan 02-2) as more of a (routine) exercise, practically the 18th Balikatan in Luzon," Tiglao said.

Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, AFP chief of staff, had earlier told Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes of the US proposal to make Balikatan 02-2, scheduled on April 22-May 6 in Central Luzon, a "part" of Team Challenge.

Villanueva also said the United States wanted to invite "multinational planning augmentation team observers" from Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore and Thailand.

The United States also recommended that Korean and Japanese C-130s airlift US troops and equipment into and out of the country.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez admitted Thursday that there was no existing legal framework that could justify the merging of Balikatan 02-2 with any multilateral military exercise such as Team Challenge.

Tiglao said what was more important for the country were proposals for a "major enhancement" of the ongoing Balikatan 02-1 in Basilan, Zamboanga City and Cebu City.

Texting averts gov't-Moro clashes

From page A1

pressed willingness to return to the negotiating table and pursue the sputtering peace talks.

But he admitted that encounters between government soldiers and Moro rebels in Lanao and Maguindanao provinces continued to occur, because of the "hardheadedness" of ground commanders on both sides. "There are many hardheaded people there who are operating even without permission from their superiors," Calizo said.

Last Wednesday could have been an example, if reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo are any gauge. The MILF reportedly shelled a former rebel camp in Lanao del Sur, now occupied by the Philippine Army, at around 10 a.m. last March 20, but a military official quickly downplayed the incident. "They are just trying to show that they are still a force to reckon with; they are trying to make their presence felt," Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta said yesterday.

Two 60-mm mortar rounds were fired in the direction of Camp Bushra, in Sandad, Bulig. The shells landed some 500 meters away from the headquarters of the Army's 29th infantry battalion, prompting government soldiers to hit back at rebel positions with 105 howitzer and 81-mm mortar fire. A platoon was also dispatched to conduct patrols, the reports said. No one was hurt in the shelling.

The MILF's training camp was captured by government forces sometime in May 2000, following then President Joseph Estrada's declaration of an "all-out war" on the rebel group, the country's biggest insurgency movement.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu denied there was any such shelling, however, saying his group never fired on Camp Bushra. The Army must have overreacted, he said, and fired at "ghosts."

Stopping skirmishes

Calizo emphasized one difference between clashes before the exchange of cell phone numbers and after it. Previously, clashes would last for hours or even days before a ceasefire was called; "now, if there are skirmishes, both panels contact each other . . . then they all stop." In some instances, Calizo said, he called the chair of the MILF peace panel, who then instructed the MILF ground commander to suspend operations.

Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza, who is also the government's peace panel chair, said both sides were seeking a more appropriate mechanism to prevent the escalation of the armed conflict.

Dureza said the local monitoring teams, which have representatives from both panels, were working hard to keep the peace negotiations working. Government representatives completed a three-day "pilot-training workshop" at the high-end Seagull Beach Resort here. The next step, he said, is to conduct another seminar for the MILF's representatives, followed by a joint seminar.

Int'l peace mission probes Basilan war

From page A1

and consultations with interest leaders, anti-Balikatan forces, and, if possible, representatives of US and Filipino military forces in Mindanao.

A similar international peace mission will shortly travel to Afghanistan and look into the situation there, said Bello, a UP sociology and public administration professor.

Bello, Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales and Nuclear-Free Philippines Coalition chair Roland Simbulan are the Philippine representatives in the 14-member mission.

Rosales, who left for Zamboanga City yesterday, said members of the House committee on civil, political and human rights would also travel to Basilan to hear the testimony of residents and local and military officials.

She said the committee was acting on a resolution filed by Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo seeking an investigation of alleged atrocities committed by the 103rd Infantry Battalion as a result of warrantless arrests it made on residents there in July last year.

Among the peace mission to Mindanao are Kraisak Choonavan, a member of the Thai Senate and chair of its standing committee on foreign affairs; Matti Wuori, of the European Parliament and its standing committees on foreign and on legal affairs; and Lee Rhiannon, of the New South Wales Legislative Council.

Afghanistan objective

The initial plan was to send an independent team of peace, development and human rights workers to document the aftermath of the US-led air bombardment in Afghanistan, the mission said.

But "the Afghanistan objective"—the arrest of Osama bin Laden and top al-Qaida operatives—had yet to be achieved "when the United States set its sights on the Philippines as the 'second front' in its global anti-terrorist offensive," it said.

"These developments ignited the resolve of international social movements and peace organizations to inquire into the Philippine situation," it added.

The mission will "make an independent assessment of the social, political and economic consequences of the conflict in Basilan."

Bello said that "in going into Afghanistan, Washington promised the capture or killing of Osama bin Laden and the dismantling of the al-Qaida terrorist network."

"Over five months after the beginning of the bombing of Afghanistan, Bin Laden remains free (and) the al-Qaida intact, but Afghanistan has been reduced to a worse state of anarchy and criminality than before the bombing," he noted.

Bello cited inflated casualty figures, allies killed by friendly fire, and civilians killed by imprecise bombing, the division of Afghanistan into warlord zones, and ethnic cleansing, among others.

"We are convinced that the same reliance on the military solution is likely to produce the same results in Mindanao and Basilan, unless we act now," he said.

Comfort station

Cora Fabros of the Gathering for Peace said the group wanted to confirm reports it had received from "sources" of the establishment of a "modern comfort station" in the military camp in Zamboanga for the US troops.

"No less than the Southern Command has established an entertainment area," Fabros said. "We have coined this (term) 'comfort station,' but it is actually an entertainment area where, we have been told, women are being brought in (at night) to provide entertainment for US and Filipino soldiers, specifically US troops."

But these reports reaching both the Akbayan and the Coalition for Peace are still to be confirmed, she said.

Bello said, however, that the matter was very important.

"Our own sense about this is that you cannot expect members of the US troops to stay celibate for long periods of time," he said, adding:

"These are troops coming from a highly oversexed society."

The peace mission has four objectives:

- To investigate reports of civilian casualties, arbitrary arrests and displacement of affected communities in Basilan, Zamboanga and Central Mindanao.
- To assess the conduct of joint RP-US military operations and their impact on the Christian-Moro conflict and the Moro separatist struggle.
- To exchange information and insights with local civil society organizations regarding security trends and conflict situations in various regions of the world.
- To gather insights with which to inform international initiatives toward peaceful resolution of conflict.

The other members of the mission are Pierre Rousset, coordinator for the European United Left/Nordic Green Left parliamentary group; Nicola Bullard, deputy director of Focus on the Global South; Aijaz Ahmad, an Indian Muslim author and expert on the cultural politics of Islam in South and Southeast Asia; and Earl Martin, a scholar on East Asia and instructor at the Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Also in the mission are Marco Mezzera, a senior officer of the Focus on the Global South and specialist in Islam in Southeast Asia; Seiko Ohashi, international coordinator of the Asian Rural Alternatives; Bill Rolston, professor of sociology at the University of Ulster; and Victoria Brittain, former deputy foreign editor of the Guardian and representative of the Transnational Institute.

Military operations

Rosales told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that they would push through with the trip to Basilan despite ongoing military operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

She said Ocampo had begged off from joining the House committee in the trip. She quoted him as saying that civilian witnesses who had earlier coordinated with Akbayan and the human rights group Karapatan had backed out because of the military operations.

Rosales said her committee would "play it by ear" in going about its investigation.

The other day, 60 members of the 10th and 12th Scout Ranger Companies ran into some 20 Abu Sayyaf bandits, triggering heavy fighting that lasted for several hours. Seven soldiers were reportedly wounded and evacuated by US military paramedics.

Rosales' committee is set to visit today the Zamboanga jail where a number of residents allegedly arrested without warrants are detained.

They will proceed to Isabela in Basilan to hear the testimony of other witnesses.

Representatives Benigno Aquino III, Hussein Amin, Leovigildo Banaag and Manuel Zamora are expected to join Rosales. ***With a report from Christine Avendaño***

NOT exactly the pedigreed and trained bomb sniffers but US Army Special Forces' Rudy Lindsey stoops for stray dogs found in the streets of Matarling, Lantawan, Basilan. EDWIN BACASMAS

PCA meeting with Erap . . .

From page A1

Greenhills, San Juan, to discuss federalism.

Saycon had said that apart from the PCA officials, former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, former Assemblyman Homobono Adaza and Estrada's former legal adviser Crispin Remulla were present at the meeting. "I want to make it clear that I am not accusing anybody of being involved in the bomb threats," Saycon told the INQUIRER. "I was simply answering a question from GMA (the TV network) regarding the groups concerned with federalism in the country. I simply said that the PCA was one of them."

A group identifying itself as the Indigenous People's Federal Army has claimed responsibility for planting the bombs discovered by law enforcers in populated areas of the metropolis in the past few days. But the bombs were obviously not intended for detonation, the authorities said.

Facilitator

Saycon said that the supposed meeting was held "in the first week of March," and that Montayre and Remulla served as facilitators. But Montayre denied having met with any leader of Estrada's party this month.

Saycon, however, stressed that he was not pointing an accusing finger at the PCA or at any other group openly pushing for the switch to federalism through political means.

"There are many groups fighting for federalism, such as the groups of Reuben Canoy and Adaza, but I don't think they would be behind terrorist (activities) because these would not be good for their cause," he said.

Saycon also said that "if you want suspects behind the bombing attempts in Metro Manila, you can point to many groups."

He named these groups as the Moro National Liberation Front, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, New People's Army and some sectors in the military," which, he said, "all use the hardware that figured in the bombing attempts."

Global lotto . . .

From page A1

extreme poverty.

"We decided that by 2015 we would halve the proportion of people who have to survive on less than a dollar a day. It is now time for us to start putting this decision into effect," she said.

Finland's presidential office said the results of preliminary research into the feasibility of the "Global Lottery" would be presented this year.

The new lottery would provide funds in addition to official development aid and would dovetail with the interests of national lotteries, the office said in a statement released here.

"The game would have a global setting and global beneficiaries but would also provide national lotteries new income to support their national beneficiaries," it said.

"For individual players, the Global Lottery would be a safe and voluntary way to contribute directly to universal human well being while playing. For the international community, the game would be an easy way to create new revenue," Finland's presidential office said.

Proceeds of the Global Lottery would flow to such areas as United Nations programs. An independent fund, established by the United Nations and national lotteries, would manage the money aimed at helping the world's poor. ***AFP***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

'Caloy' moving toward Palawan

By G. Lacuarta

TROPICAL depression "Caloy" is now heading toward Panay Island.

At 4 p.m. yesterday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) monitored the center of "Caloy" over Guimaras, or 40 km southeast of Iloilo City, with maximum sustained winds of 55 kph near the center.

Pagasa said Caloy was expected to move west-northwest at 19 kph. It was forecast to cross Southern Panay last night and will be over the Calamian Group by Saturday afternoon.

On Sunday afternoon, "Caloy" will be over the South China Sea or 480 km west-northwest of Coron, Palawan.

Public Storm Signal No. 1 is in effect over Bohol, Siquijor, Cebu, Negros provinces, Panay, Cuyo Island, Romblon, Masbate, Mindoro, Calamian Group of Islands and Palawan.

Lyceum's outstanding alumnus

THE LYCEUM of the Philippines recently conferred the Outstanding Alumnus Award on Antonio D. Seva, former press undersecretary for broadcast and GMA executive vice president.

Lyceum Board Chairman Dr. Sotero Laurel said the award was in recognition of Seva's achievements in mass media. The citation noted that Seva rose from the ranks in the private sector, beginning as a TV reporter in 1968 to executive vice president, and as press undersecretary for broadcast in the public sector.

Seva earned his B.S. Journalism degree at the Lyceum and started his career in Journalism as a TV reporter at ABS-CBN.

When Martial Law was declared, he moved to GMA. It was during that period that GMA earned the respect and admiration of the viewing public.

This is the second outstanding alumnus award conferred on Seva. In 1992, Letran University conferred on him the same award for outstanding achievements in the field of Journalism. In 1980, Seva was awarded the National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship at the prestigious University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

Gen. Romero dies; body at Jusmag chapel

RETIRED Brig. Gen. Antonio Riva Romero (Ret.) Sibuyan, Romblon died on March 19, 2002 at the age of 84.

Romero, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1941, was former commanding general of the 3rd Military Area based in Camp Lapulapu, Cebu City. After his retirement from the military, he worked for Gothong Shipping Lines and later as dean of discipline of the University of Iloilo. Romero's wife was the former Sol Zamora-Luna (now deceased).

His remains lie in state at the Jusmag Chapel at Fort Bonifacio. Necrological services will be held on March 25. Interment will be on March 26, 12 noon at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, following the 9 a.m. Mass at the St. Michael's Church in Fort Bonifacio.

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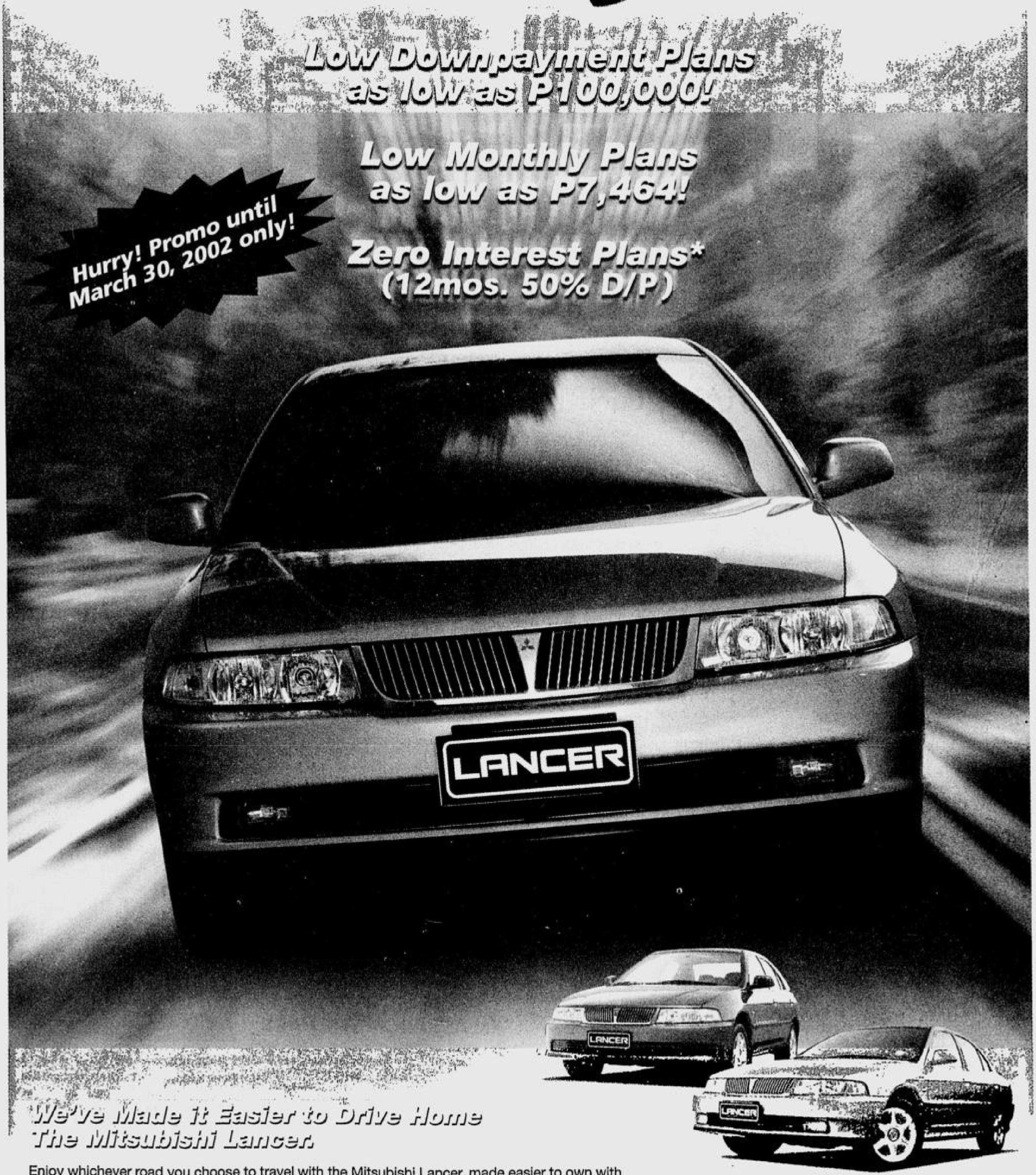

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GLS M/T	680,000		49,333	34,019	27,035	19,287	15,594	13,775
GLS A/T	710,000		51,509	35,519	28,228	20,138	16,282	14,383

P150,000 D/P Plans

Model	ESP	20% D/P	12 mos.	18 mos.	24 mos.	36 mos.	48 mos.	60 mos.
MX	790,000	150,000	57,313	39,522	31,408	22,407	18,117	16,004

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Model	ESP	50% D/P	12 mos.	18 mos.	24 mos.	36 mos.	48 mos.	60 mos.
GLX M/T	620,000	310,000	*25,833	18,414	14,649	10,450	8,373	7,464
GLS M/T	680,000	340,000	30,080	20,729	16,482	11,758	9,420	8,398
GLS A/T	710,000	355,000	31,386	21,643	17,209	12,277	9,836	8,768
MX	790,000	395,000	34,923	24,082	19,148	13,660	10,944	9,756

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SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

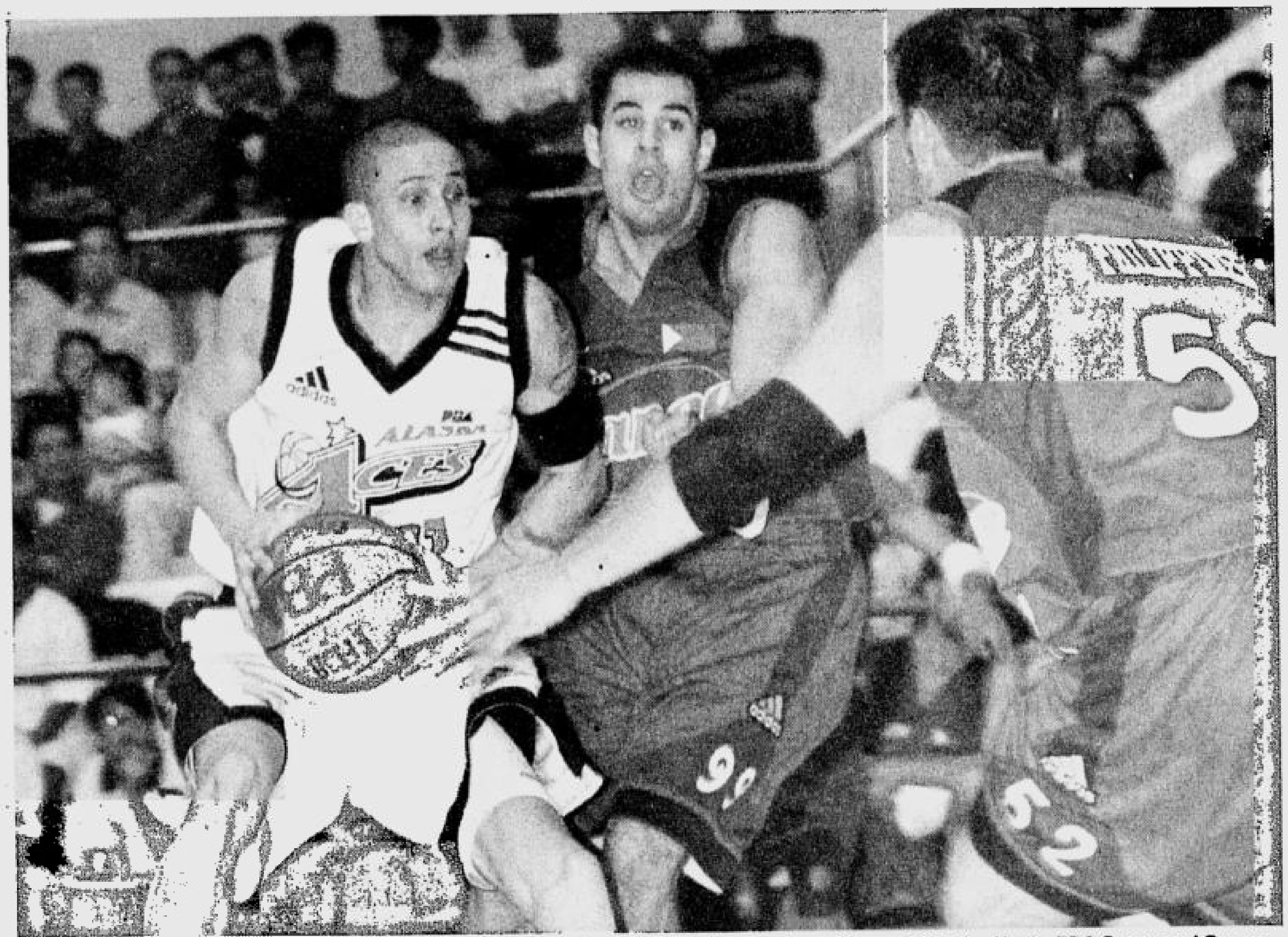
Sy bats for stronger PBL-BAP ties

PBL Chair Dioceldo Sy called yesterday for a closer cooperation with the Basketball Association of the Philippines headed by Tiny Literal. "I've already instructed Deputy Commissioner Tommy Ong to explore ways to strengthen PBL-BAP relations for the sake of basketball," Sy said. Sy said the RP Team's stint in the PBL President's Cup on April 3 is a positive sign.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA Inside Stuff at 8 a.m. (r – 6 p.m.) on Star Sports
NBA—Philadelphia 76ers vs Boston Celtics at 8:30 a.m. (r – 6:30 p.m.) on Star Sports, Minnesota Timberwolves vs Memphis Grizzlies at 2:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN
NBA Jam at 12:30 p.m. on NBN 4 / NBA Action at 2 p.m. (r) on ESPN



JOHN Arigo (left) of Alaska prepares to takeoff as Rudy Hatfield (center) and Jeffrey Cariaso of Hapee-RP defend in the PBA Governors' Cup on Thursday at the Makati Coliseum. The Aces won, 68-61. BETOY JOHNSON

Talk N Text eyes 5th win

GAMES TODAY
(Ynares Center)
4 p.m.—FedEx vs Ginebra
6 p.m.—TNT vs Selecta

Teams	W	L	Teams	W	L
Purefoods	6	1	Fedex	3	4
Red Bull	5	2	Sta. Lucia	2	4
Coca-Cola	5	2	San Miguel	3	4
Talk N Text	4	1	Selecta-RP	2	5
Hapee-RP	4	3	Ginebra	1	5
Alaska	4	3	Shell	1	6

TALK N TEXT aspires for a fifth straight win when it meets Selecta-RP Team today in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Ynares Center.

On a four-game roll, the Phone Pals will also shoot for a quarterfinal seat in the 6 p.m. confrontation in a bid to join pacesetters Purefoods and Batang Red Bull to the next round.

The Phone Pals, who beat Hapee-RP, San Miguel Beer, Sta. Lucia Realty and Barangay Ginebra in succession, own a 4-1 record, two games behind league-leader Purefoods.

Federal Express and Barangay Ginebra, both nursing serious blows from their last outings, meet in the 4 o'clock opener.

Against Selecta-RP, Talk N Text coach Bill Bayno offered a lot of skepticism since erstwhile injured cagers Kenneth Duremdes, Eric Menk and Chris Jackson are slowly getting in shape.

These guys were instrumental during Selecta-RP's 76-67 win over FedEx last week that halted the Nationals' five-game losing streak.

SMB beats Red Bull

SAN Miguel Beer continued its climb out of the cellar with a devastating 89-67 victory over Batang Red Bull in a PBA out-of-town match last night at the La Salle Sentrum in Lipa City, Batangas.

Spurs stop Mavericks, 105-102

DALLAS —Tony Parker hit a long jump shot in the final 25.4 seconds Thursday, as the San Antonio Spurs took five free throws in the final 14.5 seconds to hold off the Dallas Mavericks, 105-102. It was the Spurs' 11th straight victory, allowing them to tie the Mavericks for the Midwest Division lead. Tim Duncan scored the final two of his 32 points from the foul line with just 1.3 seconds remaining. On Dallas' last-gasp effort, Steve Nash caught a pass beyond midcourt but was only able to hurl the ball into the lane. Nash scored 28 points and was the catalyst of a third-quarter rally for the Mavericks.

OTHER RESULTS: Atlanta 118, New York 89; Minnesota 95, Memphis 93; Utah 94, Washington 79; Detroit 95, Phoenix 82; Sacramento 118, Denver 82; L.A. Clippers 116, Golden State 96. **AP**

Mitsubishi netfest gets adidas backing

DIZON

THE PHILIPPINES' adidas recently signed a contract with Mitsubishi Lancer Philippines as presentor of the 13th Mitsubishi Lancer International Junior Tennis Championships.

The event will be held at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex on April 1 to 8.

The Mitsubishi Lancer International Junior Tennis Championship, which is being organized by the Philippine Tennis Association in coordination with Mitsubishi top executive Mel Dizon, maintains its Group 2 ranking under the International Tennis Federation.

For this year, the organizers are expecting no less than 100 participants aged 12-18 representing 20 countries from Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States.

For the second year, adidas is the presentor of the event.

Clorets race next month

THE CLORETS Urban Hunt, an adventure race that combines wit, logic and a lot of common sense, will roll off next month.

The event's basic mechanics borders on the participants combing the metropolis for clues, much the same way as trekkers and mountaineers do orienteering outdoors.

The participants will be provided with the basic essentials in surviving the concrete jungle.

Elimination dates for the Clorets Urban Hunt are on April 27 and May 4 and 11. There will be 30 participants, who will be thoroughly screened in each of the elimination legs.

Except for a minimum age requirement of 18 years old, no restrictions will be applied on the participants.

A week's rest is provided the 30 qualifiers out of the three-weekend eliminations before they plunge into action in the Clorets Urban Hunt finals set for May 25.

An innovative urban adventure race, searching for clues in the Clorets Urban Hunt could involve taking the traditional city rides—jeepneys, Metro Rail or Light Rail—or beating traffic on foot to get to the objectives.

Registrations are accepted at www.pfizer.com.ph, cloretsurbanhunt@yahoo.com or at AB Communications at the 20th floor of the Pacific Star Building, Makati Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. For inquiries, call 303-0780 or 303-0683.

Bantayan Triathlon March 27

TRIATHLETES around the country will pit talents when the 1st Bantayan Island Xtreme Triathlon Challenge fires off on March 27, 2 p.m., in Sta. Fe, Bantayan Island, Cebu.

Organized by Team Rambo (led by Danao City councilor Oscar "Boying" Rodriguez) and sanctioned by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP), over P100,000 in cash prizes and gift items are at stake in the lung-busting standard distance 51.5 km (1.5 km swim-40km bike-10 km run) competition that starts at the white sand beach of Sta. Fe and ends at the Bantayan town proper.

The event sponsored by Rudy Project Philippines, Sta. Fe Mayor Roger Illustrisimo, Bantayan Mayor Geralyn Escario-Canares, Department of Tourism, Smart Communications, Speedo, Cebusports.com, Kiss 103.5 FM, CebuCentral.com, Danao Sports Commission, Equitable-PCI Bank, San Miguel Beer, Coffee Dream and the PSC aims to promote sports and tourism at the height of Bantayan Island's annual festivities.

Registration is ongoing with entry fees pegged at P400. For more details, call 0917-7316492, 032-20011212, 0918-9214924, 032-2003030, 032-2001818, 0916-4494789, 0916-8421114 and 0917-4217913.

Eric endorses Ceelin swimfest

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain has endorsed the two-day 2nd Ceelin Swimming Festival on April 6 and 7 at the St. Benedict College pool in Ayala-Alabang.

"Now more than ever, we realize that for Philippine sports to move forward, there is a need to put in place a long-range program based on age group competitions," said Buhain, a former swimming champion. "This is why the PSC has launched a national grassroots sports development program aimed at identifying new and potential talents in different sports. This is where we laud Ceelin for its 12 and under swimming festival which will expand the base of swimmers here."

More than 600 kids, including out of town entries, are expected to participate in the swimfest, according to event organizer Ral Rosario of the Philsports-based Swordfish Swimming Team.

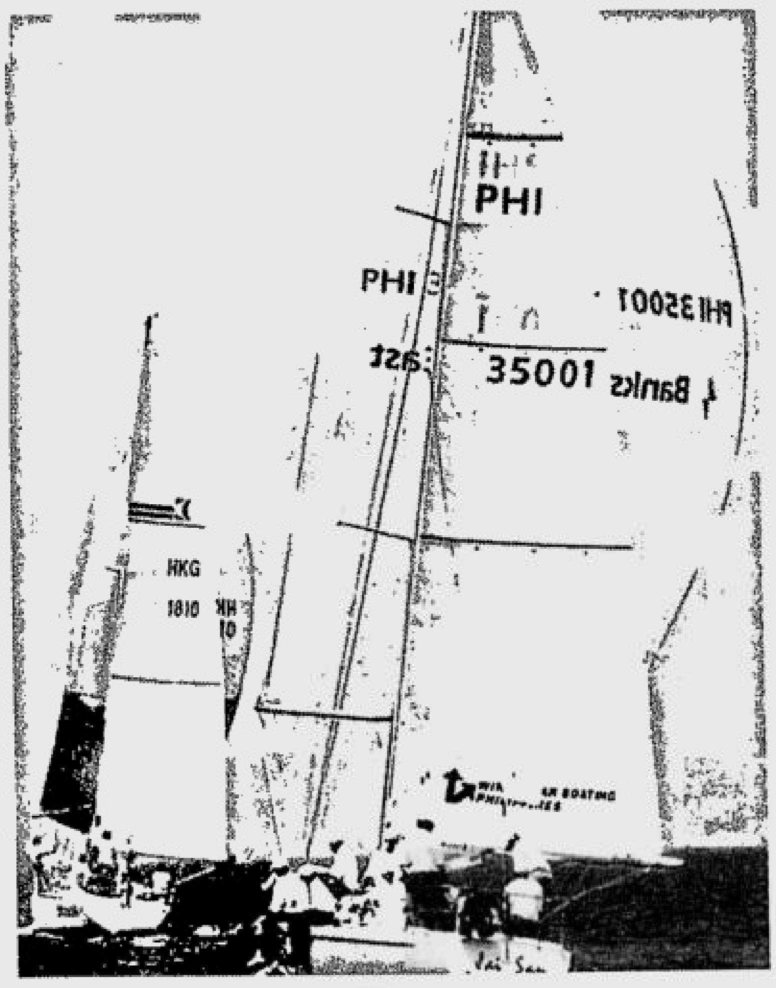
"A few years from now we can expect the entries here to be competing in serious age group events, and eventually become members of the national swimming team," said Rosario, another former Asian Games swimming gold medalist.

Ceelin product manager Joey Peralta has expressed his company's full support for sports development in the country.

"We know that the private sector has to lend a helping hand to the government in promoting sports among the youth," Peralta said.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Jennifer Saret beat Japanese Cookie Maduki, 6-4, 6-4, to snare the ITF Satellite Hong Kong junior tennis crown. Also today in 1995, Paulo Valdez and Regie Flores tallied 1310 pins to break the men's doubles record of 1276 in the 2nd Metba Mobiline Invitational championships at SM Megamall.



PRESIDENT'S CUP REGATTA

American George Hackett, on board his Jo de Ros, will defend his crown when the President's Cup Regatta sails off April 3 at Manila Bay. The yacht, champion in the cruiser/racer division, also won in 1998 and 1999. The four-day event heads for Nasugbu, Batangas, before it pushes back to Manila.

Toyota's dream chase in Formula 1

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

FORMULA 1 is like golf?

Not really.

I have a dictum for both: 3 Ms. The Marriage of Man and Machine. Both sports are quite like that.

But the similarity ends there.

Golf adheres to the saying, "Not the arrow but the Indian." Or, "A dead soldier kills no enemy."

A good golfer does not need what you might think is the best equipment in the world to win tournaments. In this game, the golfer comes first, the equipment second.

It's the Indian first, the arrow second.

The Abu Sayyaf first, the AK-47 second.

Not pretty much the same though with Formula 1.

In F1, man and machine must be in perfect harmony. Luck takes over only when two rivals possess both.

In this year's 17-leg Formula 1 season, all eyes are again on Ferrari and Michael "Schumi" Schumacher. That's because Ferrari, the winningest with 11 since F1 began in 1950, is gunning for a fourth straight world constructor's title from 1999. And Schumi, winner in the Melbourne opener on March 3 and third in Sepang on March 17, is seeking a repeat win to equal Argentine Juan Miguel Fangio's five world titles.

But if Schumi-Ferrari is the team to beat, the team to watch is Toyota with its drivers Mika Salo and Allan McNish.

I had my reservations when Toyota broke the news in 1999 that it would join this year's Formula 1. Like many of F1's grizzled observers, I also thought three years of preparation for the world's No. 1 motor sport was not exactly an ideal timetable.

But at the rate Toyota is going, the giant carmaker is proving the skeptics wrong.

In Melbourne, Finnish Salo finished sixth to earn a precious 1 point for Toyota. It was Salo's 95th Grand Prix, having raced for other cars before Toyota got him. Briton McNish did not finish in his Grand Prix debut following an 8-car pileup in Melbourne.

In Sepang, however, McNish more than redeemed himself by finishing 7th among 22 starters in the Malaysian Grand Prix.

In that race won by BMW Williams' Ralf Schumacher, McNish was running fifth three-fourths into the 56-lap event.

The 32-year-old McNish could have made it to the Magic 6 were it not for a costly 29-second delay at the pit; the Toyota crew was not ready with his replacement tires following a bungled communication relay.

But that did not break McNish's heart.

"I'm still pretty happy with my finish considering where we started on the grid," said McNish, who was 19th during flag-off. "Today, I was able to race with cars that I didn't think I'd be racing with at this stage."

The 36-year-old Salo, 10th on the grid and who was in 5th spot when an electronic problem bugged him midway into the race, finished 12th.

"I had an electronic problem with the traction control after the first pit stop," said Salo. "But still, it is encouraging to see our two cars finish as that made the team feel good."

A good point.

Many failed to finish, with 9 of the 22 starters reduced to mere spectators after only several laps.

Before the race, I like what McNish said when asked who would be Toyota's main threat for a podium finish.

"The only threat to Mika and me are our own selves," said McNish.

That applies to every person trying to chase a dream.

3 tied for 'Players' lead; play suspended

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Florida—Bad weather turned into great scoring conditions in the opening round of the $6 million Players Championship yesterday, leaving 17 players within two shots of the lead.

Chris DiMarco, Scott Hoch and Phil Mickelson still have holes to play in the first round, but when play was suspended by darkness all three were tied for the lead at five-under-par.

Defending champion Tiger Woods had completed 14 holes on the 7,093-yard par-72 Stadium course at TPC at Sawgrass when play was called.

Woods had just bogeyed the par-four fifth hole — his 14th — moments before play ended.

"I'm sure the leader will probably be six or seven (under par) by the end of the first round, but there's a long way to go," Woods said.

"It's a long tournament. It's a tough week. The conditions are only going to get tougher, which means I just need to keep plugging along." **AP**

AXN Challenge on tomorrow

A GRUELING Sunday awaits an estimated 30 teams participating in tomorrow's qualifying round of the first-ever Hong Kong AXN Challenge as they venture into a six-hour race in Subic's virgin forests, steep roads and testy waters in Olongapo.

Champions of this race will represent the Philippines in the international category of Hong Kong AXN Challenge on April 20 battling against the champions of similar qualifying competitions from India, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand.

"It will not be a walk in the park for the participants as the Subic race route offers a back-breaking, gut-pulling and body-flexing experience," said Kerry Asuncion, the event's race director. "It will definitely be a thrilling challenge."

Naga City wins Palaro bid, says Buhain

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PRESIDENT Arroyo yesterday awarded the 2002 Palarong Pambansa hosting to Naga City, ending the hard-fought battle between the city and Tubod, Lanao del Norte, for the right to stage the P420-million sporting event on May 19-26.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain confirmed the news even as he stressed that Lanao del Norte agreed to an arrangement to give way to Naga City and take its turn next year.

Backers of the two venues lobbied hard for the hosting, although Naga City enjoyed an upper hand because it was endorsed by both the PSC and the Department of Education regional directors.

Naga City, which also hosted the Palaro back in 1997, is also the home province of Education Secretary Raul Roco, whose department will still handle some of the aspects of the Games although the PSC will be the overall organizer.

Tubod has been by-passed as host twice before due to various reasons including peace and order situation although Buhain himself admitted that the atrocities are far from the province and are concentrated in Basilan which is about 500 kilometers away.

Buhain said Rep. Bobby Dimaporo and his wife Lanao del Norte Gov. Imelda Dimaporo are open-minded about it and that they agreed to hold the Games and spend a lot of time to prepare.

PSC commissioner William Ramirez said the news would give Lanao enough time to polish its organizational skills which was put to the test when it hosted the first Mindanao Friendship Games last year.

Davaoeño new PSC commissioner

The President also announced the appointment of Leon G. Montemayor from Ateneo de Davao as the new PSC commissioner, replacing Weena Lim.

Montemayor, who is a good friend of Ramirez's, is a businessman-sportsman and a nephew of Rep. Manuel Garcia. He was appointed on March 6 according to the appointment letter faxed to the INQUIRER.

DANCESPORT CHAMPS

John Co and Antonette Besuña jubilate after winning the ten-dance category of the recent quarterly ranking and competition of the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines at the world-class Fontana Convention Center in Clark Field, Pampanga. Also shown are second placers Anna and Jerswin Poloyapoy (extreme left), third placers Karla and Brian Ocana, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit and DSCP head Becky Garcia.

SPORTSWATCH

Hussein cops Milo title

DAVAO—Hussein Macapendeg of Albert Einstein School in Cotabato City captured his first-ever Milo title following an 8-7 (1) victory over Franz Bonilla at the close of the rain-marred 2002 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop over the weekend here at the PTA hardcourts. Macapendeg, the grandson of Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan,shared the limelight with Zhane Quitara in the unisex 10-under and girls' 12-under; Ed Agnelo Diez in the boys' 16 under, Lourdes Binoya in the girls' 14-under, Mary Ann Luy and Golde Mae Valenzona as co-champions in the girls' 16 under, and Jessica Haro in the girls' 18-under categories.

4-Cock Derby at Big Dome

MEYCAUAYAN Mayor Eddie Alarilla will host a one-day, big-time "Four-Cock Derby For-a-Cause" on Friday, April 5, at the Araneta Coliseum. The event aims to raise funds for the scholars of the Mariano Alarilla Foundation. Competing are champion cockers from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, including Metro Manila. Among them are Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Ambassador Danding Cojuangco, James Chiongbian, former Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares, two-time Cocker of the Year Jun Santiago, Pampanga's Jun and Rudy Jingco, former PBA commissioner Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza, recent World Slasher champion Dicky Lim, Mario Villamor, Madiangbayan brothers, Alex and Gerry Escalona. Boy Lechon and RQP, Gerry Fevidal, Louie Cua, former Mayors Jessie Viceo and Vic Amante, Iking Araneta, Ram Lopez, Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Boy Jiao, Ruoichi Saito, Ruel Ricafort and Manny Co.

NGAP tilt at Valley

FELICIANO

THE NATIONWIDE eliminations for the national age-group championships fire off with the Metro Manila leg on Monday, March 25, at Valley. The qualifiers will play in the national finals on May 7-9 at the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club. The tournament is being staged by the National Golf Association of the Philippines through its president Rod Feliciano and the Philippine Golf Foundation as part of the NGAP's continuing program for talent development.

Summer tennis camp slated

TOP varsity coaches Karl Santamaria of UAAP men's and women's champion University of Santo Tomas, Dennis Sta. Cruz and Randy de Guzman of Ateneo and Roland Kraut of De La Salle will conduct the Prince Summer Tennis Camp from April 3-20 at the Valle Verde Country Club in Pasig City. The camp, supported by Accel, Nassau balls, Eastpack, Tourna Grip and Eusebio Sports, is offering lessons for beginners (8-9:30 a.m.) and intermediate/advanced (9-11 a.m.) on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Interested parties may contact the VVCC outdoor court at tel. 6311711.

UST, La Salle seek 2nd win

EXCITING baseball action in the First Metro Manila Championship returns as University of Santo Tomas and La Salle seek a fitting follow-up to their weekend triumphs by battling separate foes today at the Rizal Ballpark. After levelling their record to 1-1 by downing Ateneo in Group B, UST meets the Titans at 9 p.m., while La Salle, 9-6 winner over the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, tackles reigning UAAP champion University of the Philippines at 3 p.m. in Group C.

RACING TIPS

At Santa Ana By Mr. 999

Race 1–1. Rising Fast 2. Red Hahn 3. Come In Glory 4. Fly Away

Race 2–1. Shooting Stars 2. Born Perfect 3. Bright star 4. Dance in the Wind

Race 3–1. Dazzling Doe 2. Action Mark

Race 4–1. Daseldurf 2. Selectee 3. Green Buck 4. T Square 5. Techno Blues

Race 5–1. Golden Dave 2. Mr. Lucas 3. Apple Splash 4. Dressed to Impress 5. Expresso

Race 6–1. Houdini 2. Royal Vic 3. Decathlete 4. King Edward

Race 7–1. Better King 2. Strong Element 3. Well Noted 4. Exotic

Race 8–1. Sparkling Sky 2. High Roller

Race 9–1. Ready Aim Fire 2. Victory Lap 3. Air Love 4. Lady Victoria 5. Marginal Note

Race 10–1. Togsi's Ambition 2. Pretty Pleasing 3. Ong Bee 4. Dynasouls

Race 11–1. Yes Sir 2. Big Treasure 3. Snowy Sea 4. Armee's Hope 5. Forest Dancer

Race 12–1. Adam's Call 2. Arresbee 3. Andee's Joy

Race 13–1. Bright Task 2. Oh Diva 3. May's Magic 4. Centennial 5. Seiko Shita 6. St. Emilion

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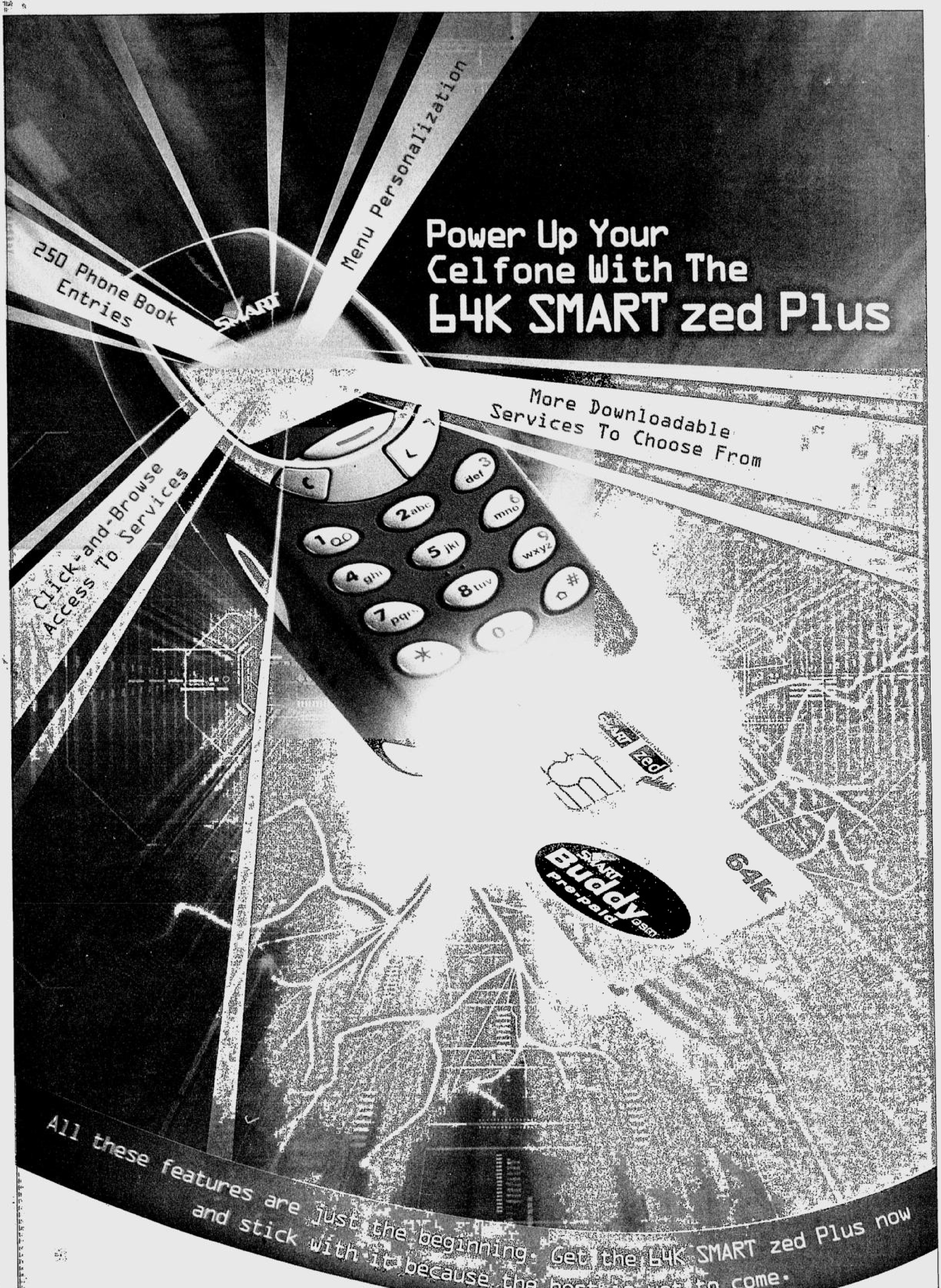
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METRO

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

- **Pasay dads slam Naia over snub** /A22
- **On Target: My friend, Mark Jimenez should be extradited** /A22
- **NBI head sacks 44 'abusive' agents** /A22
- **NBP official harassed me to award P1.6M deal-lawyer** /A22

If you find a 'bomb,' stay calm, act fast

By Philip C. Tubeza

BE CALM, act fast, call 117.

These are three of the things residents of Metro Manila must do immediately if a suspicious-looking package were found in their midst, according to Insp. Lorenzo B. Molato, chief of the Western Police District Explosives and Ordnance Division.

The 300-yard radius around a suspected bomb should also be evacuated, he said.

"If a suspicious package were found on one floor of a multi-story building, that entire floor must be evacuated," he said. "If the package were determined to be a bomb, then the entire building should be evacuated."

But the evacuation must be done in an orderly fashion to avoid a stampede, he cautioned.

Building officials should also cordon off the suspicious-looking package.

"Once it is isolated, they should immediately contact law enforcers," Molato said.

Aside from 117, another police emergency line to call is 523-1251, the direct line of the WPD-EOD.

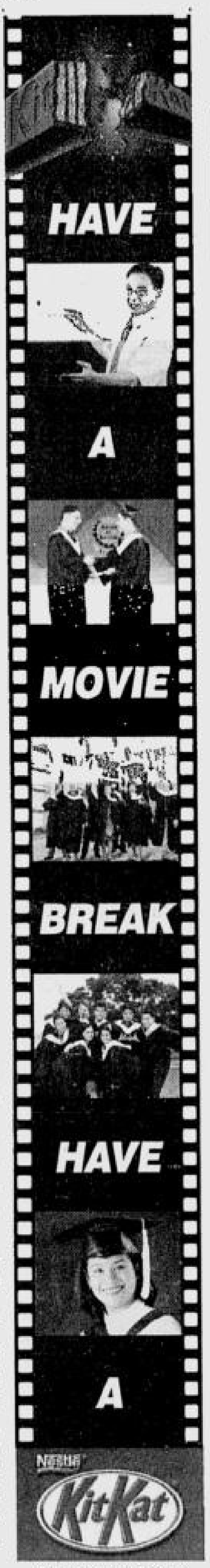
EOD bomb specialists are ready to respond to any call 24 hours a day, Molato said.

"Even if they are prank calls, we have to respond," he said. "We won't know for certain if the call is real or not until we get there. We can't take any chances."

WPD mobile patrol cars are also expected to arrive in advance at the scene to check if there is really a suspicious package.

The bomb scare placed the WPD on heightened alert and all leaves of Manila

IF YOU FIND/ A22



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Lim loses case vs Atienza

By Jerome Aning and Blanche Rivera

A BEAMING Manila Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday welcomed the decision of the Commission on Elections junking the disqualification case filed against him by his political arch rival, former Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim.

"I hope this decision will put an end to speculations resulting from these baseless accusations hurled against me," the mayor said after he received his copy of the decision.

But all is not lost for Lim because the division only ruled that Atienza can no longer be disqualified since the election has already taken place.

LIM

ATIENZA

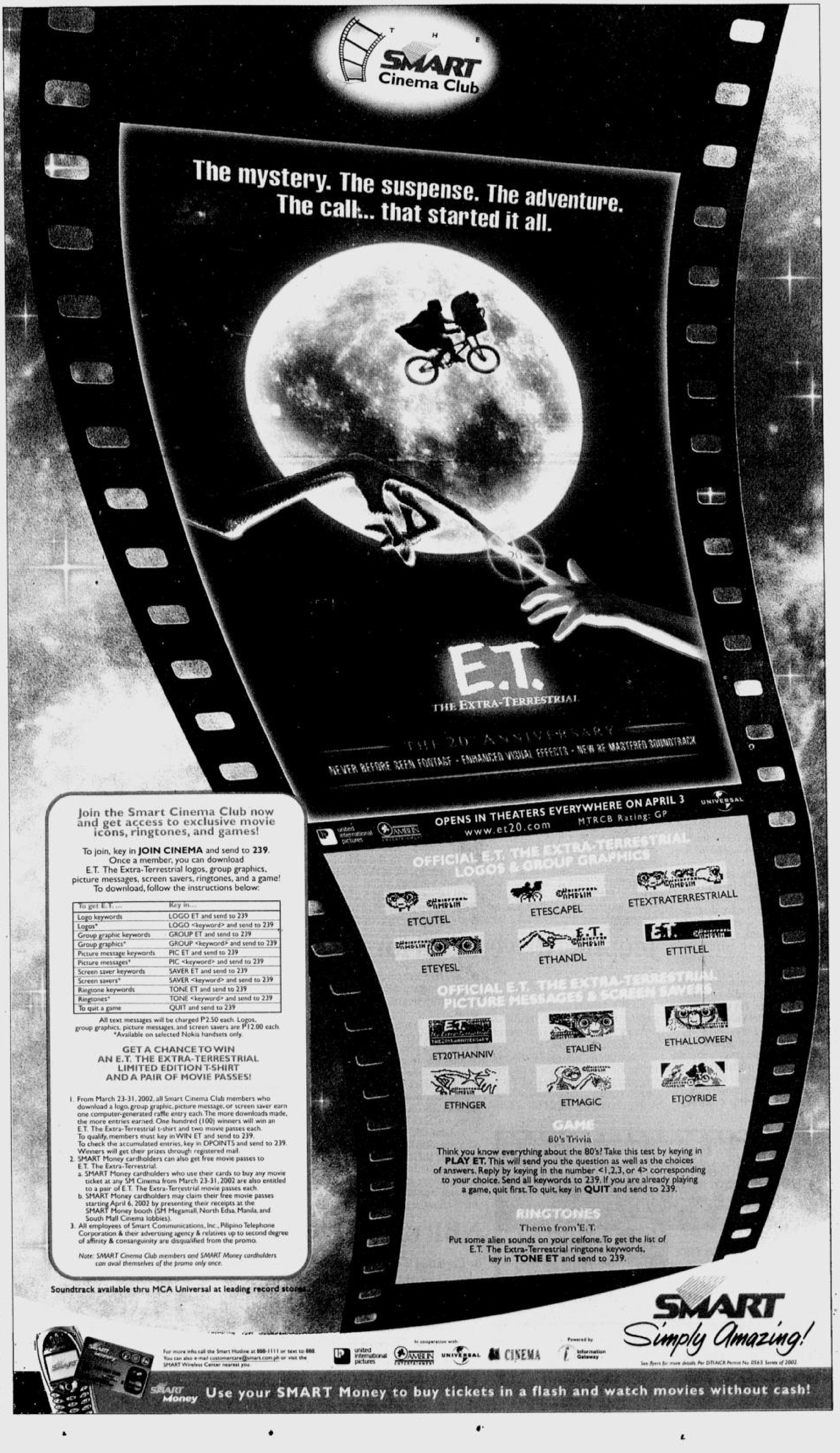
According to Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra, the dismissal of the petition to suspend the proclamation of Atienza does not prejudice the disqualification case filed against the mayor, who would be investigated for his alleged misuse of city government funds to boost his campaign in last year's elections.

The commissioners have already referred Lim's complaint to the Comelec's law department for preliminary investigation.

The Comelec's first division said in a resolution that the petition of Amado Tetangco, a former Manila official in Lim's city administration, seeking the suspension of the proclamation of Atienza was moot and academic because Atienza had assumed office right after he was proclaimed winner in the mayoral race.

"Even if the petitioner and intervenors have meritorious ground to warrant the disqualification of the respon-

LIM LOSES/ A22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My friend, Mark Jimenez, should be extradited

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WHO'S that congressman who says that extraditing Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez might result in a constitutional crisis?

The lawmaker, who didn't have the balls to expose himself but whom the Inquirer identified as a "ranking congressman," said that if it came to a House vote, most of his colleagues would likely vote against extradition.

Extraditing Jimenez, according to this unnamed congressman, means his expulsion from the House of Representatives.

***

Then the lawmaker exhibited flawed logic: "Effectively, he's still a congressman. He continues to function as a congressman so how can he be extradited?

In the event Congress will not heed a court order for Jimenez's extradition, the congressman said, a "constitutional crisis" would result.

In the eyes of that unnamed congressman, the House of Representatives is an Old Boys Club. Nobody can touch any of its members because lawmakers are above the law, according to his logic.

***

But not all members of Congress are as patronizing as that stupid congressman.

Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez said Congress could not block the extradition if the court upheld the US request to extradite Jimenez.

The Supreme Court, Gonzalez said, has already ruled that Congress cannot be the refuge of scoundrels. Jimenez's position as elected representative of Manila's sixth district does not give him immunity from being tried here or in the United States.

***

If Jimenez is not extradited on account of his lofty position in government we might as well scrap the country's extradition treaty with the United States.

The government might as well forget about asking for the extradition of Charlie "Atong" Ang and other fugitives of justice who have sought refuge in the United States.

The government might as well also forget about coordinating with the United States in gathering evidence against Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who's suspected of having stashed away millions of dollars in drug money in America.

Whoever said that in the eyes of the law, everybody is equal must have said it in jest. Some people are more equal than others.

Other Filipinos not so prominent as Jimenez who faced charges in United States courts were whisked off to the United States unceremoniously.

Are we sacrificing the country's extradition treaty commitments for just one man?

***

No less than the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Robert Mueller, came to the country to remind our government of our commitments to the United States under the extradition treaty.

Mueller's primary reason for coming to see President Macapagal-Arroyo was to tell her that the United States was worried our government might block Jimenez's extradition.

***

Isn't that enough reason for his colleagues in Congress, who still entertain the idea of protecting him, to keep their hands off Jimenez's case?

***

Look, guys, I have nothing personal against Mark Jimenez. I find him a very nice and accommodating person. I hit it off well with him the first time I talked with him; we became instant friends.

Mark Jimenez's charity is not a put-on. I am a witness to that.

While we were shooting some scenes for my public service TV program, "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" inside a police precinct in Quezon city more that two years ago, I noticed that the cop behind the complaints desk was an invalid. He became paralyzed after he was shot by a crime suspect who was being investigated at the precinct some years back.

The invalid cop said he would die of boredom and inactivity if he was forced to retire because of his disability. The only thing that kept him alive was the thought that he was still a useful person. Also keeping the invalid policeman alive was the maintenance medicine for his nerves which, at the time, was already very expensive.

I thought of soliciting from friends to help the policeman. Some begged off, saying they didn't have enough funds for charity. Jimenez did not only write out a check for the cop's medicines for several months, he promised to supply the medicines for life.

The cop was very grateful when I delivered the check to him. And what do you know? Jimenez did not want me to publish his charitable deed!

***

I understand the feelings of some members of Congress toward one of their own. It's no easy to like Mark Jimenez because he's a very likable person.

But it's not about personal feelings toward a friend, it's about upholding the country's integrity and the rule of law. Mark Jimenez must be extradited to the United States so that we can become respectable and credible in the community of nations.

I hope Mark will understand why this piece was written.

***

Erlinda S. Ramones, former vice president for claims of Fortune Insurance and Guarantee, has filed a libel case against this writer and some officials of the Inquirer, for a supposedly "libelous" article about her in this space on Feb. 16, 2002.

Ramones said that her reputation was allegedly destroyed by the article which linked her to a syndicate victimizing banks on fraudulent claims.

What reputation was there to destroy, ma'm, when it had already been destroyed?

On Dec. 19, 2001, you were arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation for qualified theft which Fortune Insurance filed against you in court. You posted a P40,000 bail for your temporary liberty.

The reason for the criminal case against you, Ms Ramones, was your alleged links to the syndicate while you were still working for Fortune Insurance.

Pasay dads slam Naia over snub

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PASAY City Council accused airport authorities for allegedly bypassing the local government in the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 project.

Councilor Allan Panaligan, head of the city's committee on public works and highways, said on Thursday that the Manila International Airport Authority had been refusing to coordinate the project with the council despite consistent reminders from city officials.

"They've been snubbing us all along," he told the Inquirer. "So how come they're coordinating the project now?"

The Miaa is now securing permits and other pertinent documents from the local government following a series of complaints from residents and upon the advice of the project's investors, according to Panaligan.

The Miaa, the councilor said, stands to lose about P500,000 for each day that the construction of the Naia Terminal 3 is delayed. The project is supposed to be completed by December, Panaligan said.

He said the project is currently facing three key problems pertaining to its runway, fuel depot, and electrical transmission.

Pasay residents are protesting the proposed transfer of an aviation gas depot from the Naia compound to a site in Barangay 201 located 200 meters away from the nearest residential area.

They fear that the facility, which contains high-octane aviation gas, will endanger their lives since it is susceptible to terrorist attacks.

The three major oil companies in the country—Shell, Caltex and Petron—are using the depot through the Joint Oil Companies Storage Project.

Villamor residents are also up in arms over the construction of transmission lines that will cut across the thickly populated 12th Street. They fear the lines' "electromagnetic field" might pose serious health problems.

Another problem is the construction of a parallel taxiway on a 8.6-hectare property at the Nayong Pilipino. The project will affect key portions of the theme park and force its employees to lose their jobs once it closes next month.

Charito Planas, the theme park's executive director, announced on Thursday that the Miaa had already agreed to pay Nayong Pilipino P500 million in five years for the use of its property.

'Martilyo Gang' boss captured

THE ALLEGED leader of the Martilyo Gang and three of his accomplices were arrested last week in Quezon City, according to National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco.

The gang got its name from its members' use of hammers to break the glass display cases of jewelry stores that they rob.

Wycoco said Hassan S. Maliga, 29, of Culiat, Quezon City; Jeric S. Abdullah, 23; Gaspar L. Dalandan, 29, also of Culiat; and Nasser S. Canda, 27, of Intramuros, Manila, were arrested in a buy-bust operation on March 13 by a composite team of NBI agents, members of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) and the Central Police District Intelligence unit.

Maliga was identified as the group's ringleader.

Authorities said they found on the suspect 239 grams of shabu and two .38 revolvers, according to Wycoco.

The Martilyo Gang was allegedly responsible for nine robberies in the metropolis and the murder of three police informants.

Wycoco said the suspects confessed during their interrogation that they were conducting a surveillance operation on their next target. They were allegedly shadowing a bank customer who was supposed to withdraw a huge amount of payroll money, he said.

Authorities are still hunting down four other gang members — Jimboy Dalgan, a certain Tagani, a certain Pata, and Junnidel Yusof Andatuan.

The arrested suspects were charged with illegal possession of firearms and illegal drugs before the Quezon City prosecutor's office, Wycoco said. No bail was recommended for their temporary liberty.

Philip C. Tubeza

A HOME-MADE bomb found in Quezon City, near GMA 7, one of several discovered last wednesday.

DENNIS SABANGAN

If you find a 'bomb ...

From page A21

cops were cancelled. The WPD has also deployed 200 policemen to secure vital installations in the capital.

Monday night, two bombs were found in the Central Business District of Makati City. Two more bombs were found in other places in Metro Manila on Tuesday. On Thursday, four more bombs were found in Manila and Caloocan City, bringing to seven the number of explosives found in the metropolis since Monday night.

All the bombs were found with letters from a group that identified itself as the Indigenous People's Federal Army, which is calling for a federal form of government.

Police said the bombs were not meant to explode but to send a political signal.

Bombs were also found in Davao, Gen. Santos City, and Cotobato.

Jeepney drivers call for fare deregulation

By Alcuin Papa

JEEPNEY drivers associations are calling for the deregulation of jeepney fares to absorb the recent increases in oil prices.

The drivers groups, led by the Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organizations-Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators (PCDO-ACTO), said they would file a petition for fare deregulation before the Land Transportation Franchising Regulatory Board after the Holy Week.

Efren de Luna, president of the PCDO-AACTO, said his group would file a petition to deregulate jeepney and regular bus fares after a series of meetings and consultations with their members and other groups. The members decided they want a direct hand in determining fares.

De Luna added that the big three oil companies have been raising the prices of their oil products even when prices in the world market have not increased. He said the government has no right to lower oil prices after the oil deregulation law was passed a few yeas ago. Transport groups have been calling for the repeal of the law, saying it is slowly killing the transport industry.

"If jeepney and other transport and operators will be given a hand in increasing and lowering fares, the playing field would be leveled," De Luna said.

He said drivers and operators would increase their fares based on the oil price increases but that they were more than willing to lower the fares as long as oil companies also lowered their prices.

The PCDO-ACTO has a pending petition before the LTFRB to lower jeepney fares but it has been rendered moot due to the recent oil price increases.

NBI head sacks 44 'abusive' agents

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE APPOINTMENTS of 44 confidential agents (CAs) of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) have been revoked after the bureau received complaints of their alleged abuses, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said yesterday.

"I have given a stern warning to the confidential agents that they should conduct themselves properly befitting their appointments," Wycoco said.

"I will not hesitate to cancel their privilege and confiscate their badges if I get valid complaints against them."

Confidential agents are NBI "assets" or informants who provide information or tips about criminal activities.

Unlike intelligence and investigative agents who are organic to the NBI, the appointments of confidential agents end with that of the NBI director who appointed them.

Wycoco said confidential agents are also important to the bureau because of the NBI's increasing caseload.

But some confidential agents have come under fire for allegedly abusing their power. Some were even found to be posing as organic agents of the bureau apparently to scare off law enforcers who accost them.

Lim loses case ...

From page A21

dent, the subject petition unfortunately cannot prosper (because) the elections have already been concluded," read the resolution signed by Comelec commissioners Borra, Luz Tancangco and Rufino Javier.

But the commissioners also ordered the law department to look into allegations that Atienza spent about P2.4 million from the local government coffers to finance his campaign in the guise of legitimate activities for barangay and youth officials.

These included out-of-town trips for leadership training seminars and expensive dinner discussions with media people and officials of barangays and the Sangguniang Kabataan.

Atienza's camp reportedly has released statements claiming the Comelec has dismissed the disqualification case against him.

"The disqualification case is still with us," Borra said in a phone interview. "They should read the resolution."

He added that the first division would take up the disqualification case after the Holy Week.

When asked if Atienza was issuing misleading statements to pressure the Comelec to favor his case, Borra replied: "Whatever is favorable to one party - that is what they will say."

The decision of the division will be deemed final and executory if the losing parties do not file a motion for reconsideration within five days of the receipt of the decision.

Lim filed the disqualification case against Atienza on April 16, 2001. Another election case he filed against the mayor has yet to be resolved.

Atienza called on Lim and other rivals in the 2001 mayoral race to "set aside politics and work with (me) for the good of the city."

"The election is over and the next one is still a long way ahead," he said. "I am extending the hand of friendship and cooperation so we can work together in bringing genuine development to the city."

The Atienza camp earlier claimed that Lim's disclosures on the disqualification case were a "mere smokescreen" to cover the fact that he was losing in the election case.

NBP official harassed me to award P1.6M deal—lawyer

By Christian V. Esguerra

A RANKING official of the New Bilibid Prisons has filed a complaint against prisons chief Ricardo Macala for allegedly "harassing" him into awarding a P1.6-million contract for the delivery of chicken to a firm that failed to comply with the requirements.

In a letter to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, lawyer Kabungsuan Makilala alleged that Macala gave him a tongue-lashing when he did not grant the contract to F.A. Agriculture Trading after the NBP Bids and Awards Committee's bidding session on Feb. 15.

Macala admitted he had snapped at Makilala, but said it was only because the lawyer tried to disqualify F.A. Agriculture even if the firm issued the lowest bid of P57 per kilo of chicken.

The contract was to cover the delivery of about 29,000 kilos of chicken for the consumption of NBP inmates from March to April, he said.

Makilala said he would file a case of grave misconduct against Macala before the Office of the Ombudsman.

But in a telephone interview with the Inquirer, Macala said he wanted Makilala to award the chicken contract to "F.A. Agriculture simply because it gave the lowest bid."

Makilala said that on Feb. 26 Macala phoned him and ordered him to award the delivery contract to F.A. Agriculture. In Macala's office at the NBP later that day, the director of the Bureau of Corrections allegedly cursed Makilala in front of two visitors as he reiterated his order.

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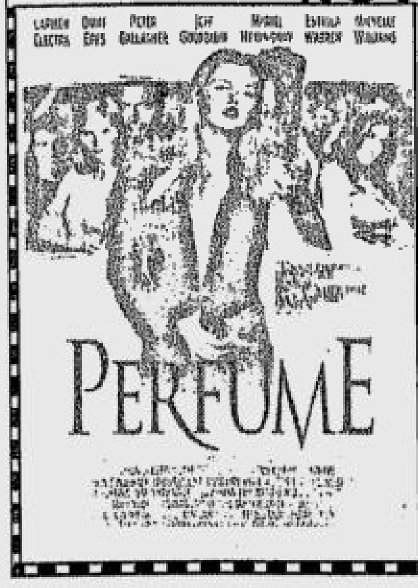

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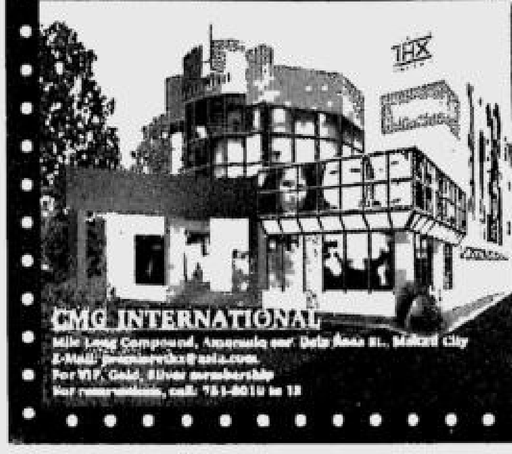

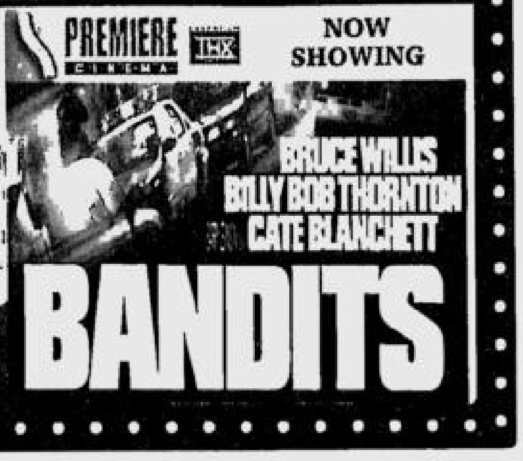

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1,000 lose homes in Taytay fire

A FIRE of still undetermined cause left about 1,000 people homeless in a densely populated area in Taytay, Rizal early Wednesday morning.

Nobody was reported hurt in the fire, authorities said.

Police said the four-hour blaze started shortly after 3 a.m. and gutted at least 150 houses at Pinyera Plains in Sitio Tikling, Barangay Dolores. The houses were mostly made of light materials like wood, police added.

Aris clavio, a member of the Taytay Municipal Fire Brigade, said they received unconfirmed reports that the fire broke out in a house occupied by two women who were quarrelling at the time. He said the fire immediately spread to adjoining areas.

The dimly lighted, narrow roads, low water pressure, and the presence of hundreds of onlookers made it very difficult for firemen, who came from different parts of Rizal and Metro Manila, to battle the blaze, authorities said.

"Fortunately we have local barangay tanod and policemen to control the crowd," Clavio said.

He said a number of fire victims occupied vacant areas at the Taytay-Antipolo junction, causing traffic congestion.

Taytay Mayor June Zapanta was able to convince the owner of a vacant lot near the fire scene to allow the fire victims to use the site temporarily. **Nelson F. Flores**

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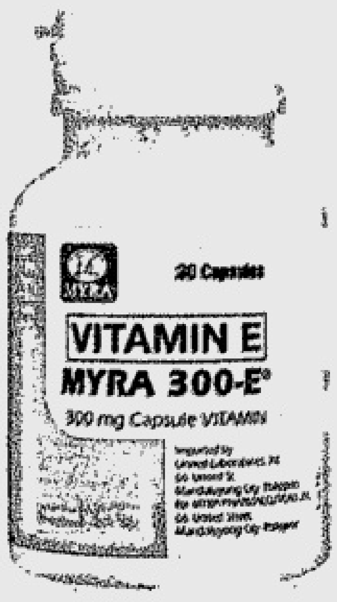

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Color coding suspended during Holy Week

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will suspend the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction or "color-coding," from March 25 to 29, and not March 25 to April 1 as earlier reported.

The MMDA will also deploy more than 3,000 traffic enforcers during the Holy Week. Most of them will be assigned in the North and South Luzon expressways.

None authorized to dump in Pasig site, says Taguig

TAGUIG Mayor Sigfrido "Freddie" Tinga said in a statement yesterday that the municipal government had never authorized anyone, including its garbage contractor, IPM Construction and Development Corp., to dump garbage at the supposed dumpsite in Barangay Pinagbuhatan in Pasig City.

"Under the contract entered into by the municipal government with IPM, they are supposed to collect garbage and bring it initially to the Materials Recovery Facility in Manggahan for segregation," the mayor's statement said. "Non-recyclable waste materials should then be brought to the Rodriguez landfill. It's as simple as that."

He said that under the terms of the contract entered into by the parties in Jan. 2, 2002, IPM should comply with existing environmental and sanitation laws.

A statement issued by IPM Construction and Development Corp. said the "company does not control the dumpsite and that there has been rampant use of IPM's name by those involved in illegal dumping activities." IPM also claimed it has secured the endorsement of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Environmental Management Bureau for upgrading its open dump in Sta. Ana, Taytay, Rizal into a controlled disposal facility.

"This is what I have been saying all along," the mayor said in his statement. "They should check the facts before they make any accusations because, aside from the fact that it is unfair to the municipal government, it also unduly alarms the public."

While he does not discount the possibility that Pinagbuhatan might have been used as a dumpsite, he insisted that Taguig never authorized the dumping of garbage there.

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Holy Week on the Hill

BUKAL ng Tipan in Maryhill Compound, Taytay, Rizal, is offering a unique "Holy Week experience on the Hill" beginning Maundy Thursday, March 28.

A Last Supper will be held in the garden on Maundy Thursday and diners will discover the "Peter" in them around a bonfire in the evening. Each participant may carry a cross to the top of the hill at noon on Good Friday or just become Simon or Veronica to someone on the way. On Saturday, participants will identify with the disappointments of the disciples of Emmaus and will be one with them as they wait for the unexpected to happen.

For reservations and information, please call 658-5064 or 825-3892.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMMED
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	BANDITS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	MAJESTIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	JIMMY NEUTRON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	JOHN Q
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	SNAKE CHARMER
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	AMADILO
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	JOHN Q
ODEON-2	BANDITS
ROBEN	SNAKE CHARMER
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BIBINGKA
REMAR	SNAKE CHARMER
REMAR-2	BIBINGKA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BIBINGKA
B	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE MAJESTIC
CINEMA-2	BANDITS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ACHILLES
CINEMA-3	BIBINGKA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	D-TOX
CINEMA-6	MASARAP HABANG MAINIT
CINEMA-7	EVA
CINEMA-8	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MAJESTIC
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BANDITS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JOHN Q
CINEMA-12	JIMMY NEUTRON
CINEMA-14	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-15	GOT 2 BELIEVE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	GOOD ADVICE
CINEMA-2	JIMMY NEUTRON
CINEMA-3	BANDITS
CINEMA-4	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-5	THE MAJESTIC
CINEMA-6	JOHN Q
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

GOOD ADVICE - P 13 12:10, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10	JIMMY NEUTRON - GP 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	BANDITS - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:10
A BEAUTIFUL MIND- P 13 1:10, 3:55, 6:40, 9:30	THE MAJESTIC - GP 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	JOHN Q - P 13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

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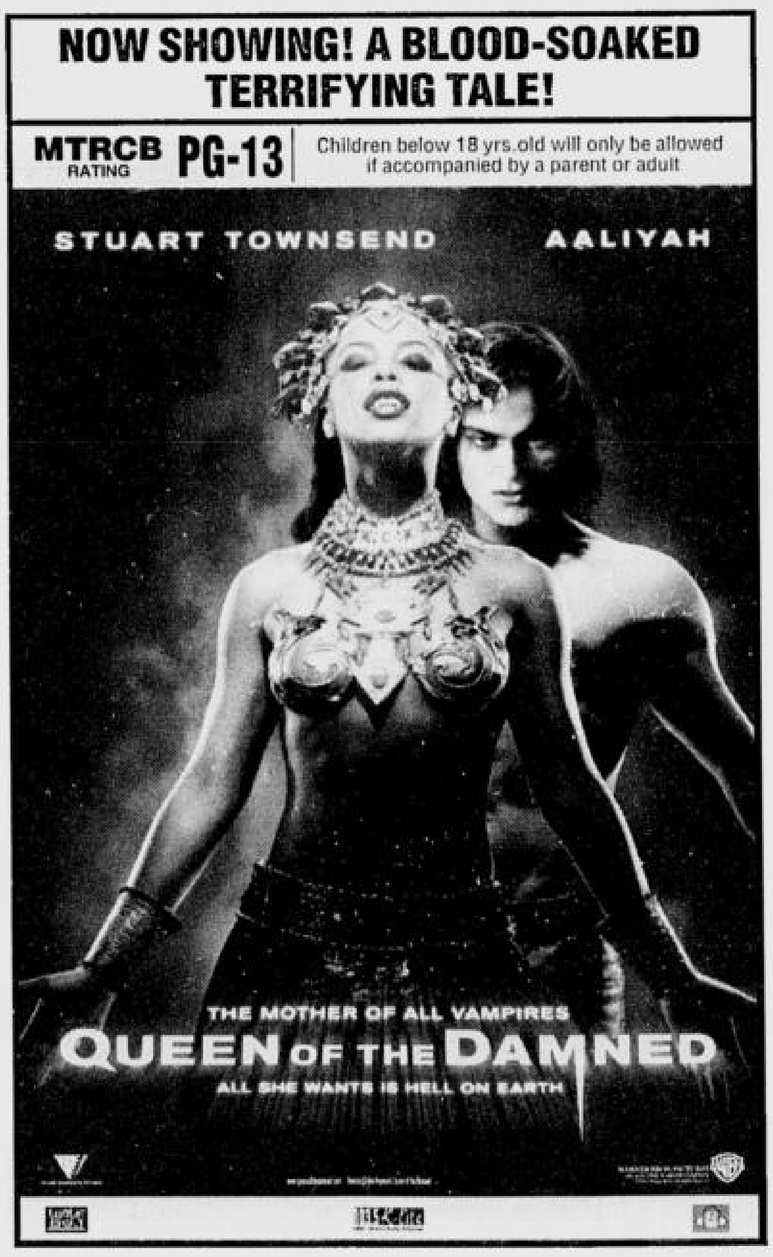

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A Hospital Under Siege. 14 Trapped Hostages. No way Out.

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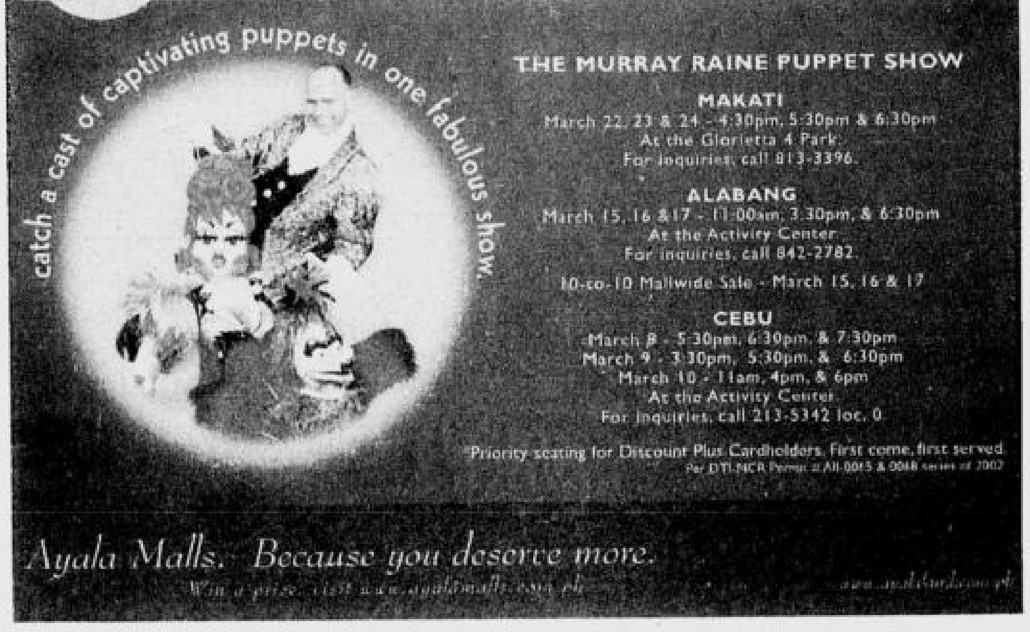
1 BANDITS	1 JOHN Q	4 GOOD ADVICE	1 PERFUME (Phil. Premiere)	1 BANDITS THX
2 THE ROYAL TENEBAUMS	2 THE MAJESTIC	5 JIMMY NEUTRON: BOY GENIUS	2 BANDITS	2 THE MAJESTIC
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS	3 BANDITS THX GUARANTEED SEATS	6 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED	3 JOHN Q	3 JOHN Q
4 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED		7 A BEAUTIFUL MIND	Onstage 4 LANI ON STAGE APRIL 12, 13, 19, 20,26 & 27 - 9 PM	4 JIMMY NEUTRON: BOY GENIUS
				5 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

The Ayala malls Events
THIS WEEK'S EVENTS
MAKATI ALABANG CEBU



catch a cast of captivating puppets in one fabulous show.

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MAKATI
March 22, 23 & 24 - 4:30pm, 5:30pm & 6:30pm
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For inquiries, call 813-3396.

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March 8 - 5:30pm, 6:30pm, & 7:30pm
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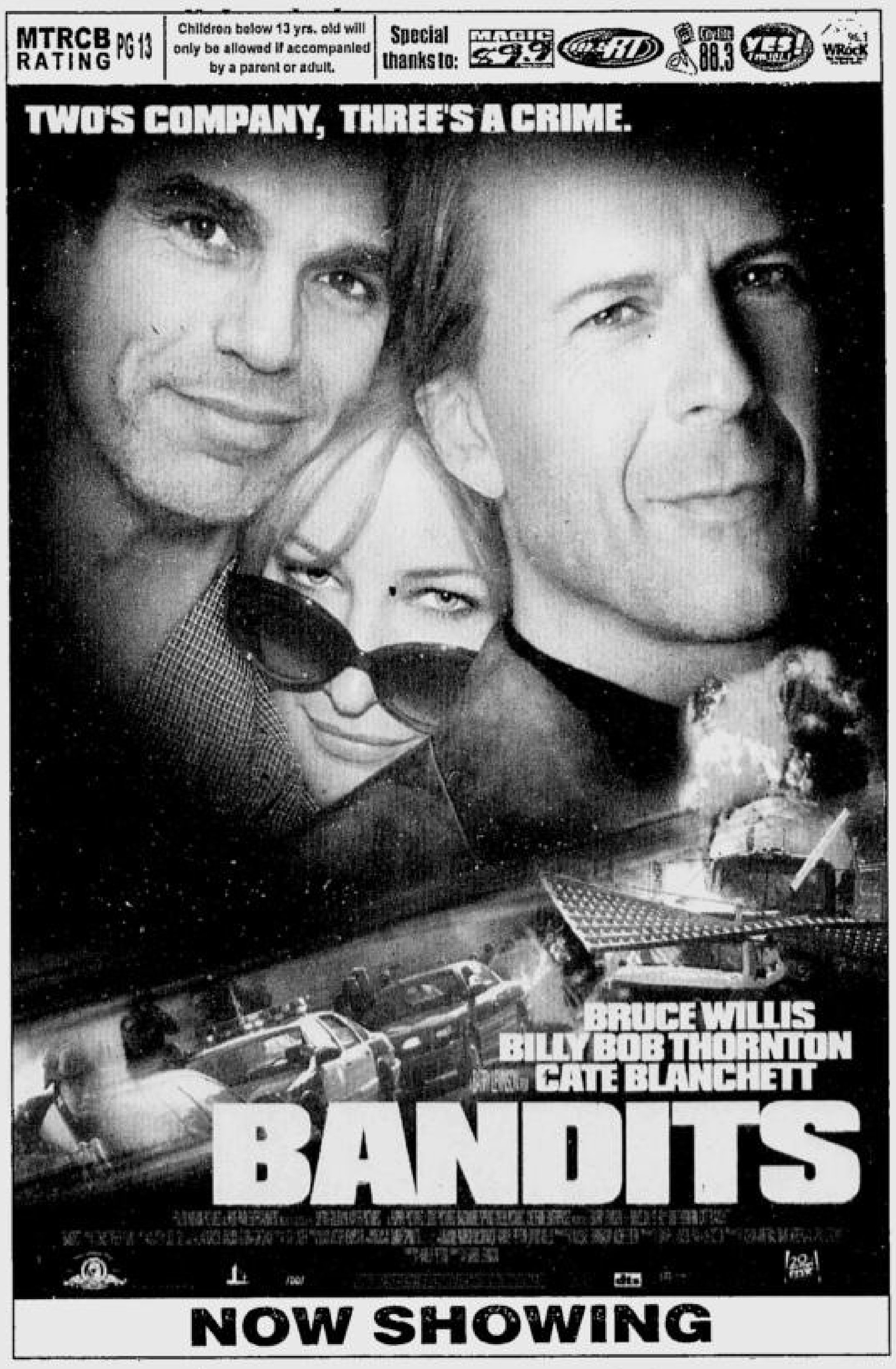

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BANDITS

NOW SHOWING

100 years of 'cenaculo' in Pasay

THE 100-year-old tradition of the *cenaculo* is being revived with a presentation at the Tanghalang San Juan Nepomuceno at the Malibay Plaza in Malibay, Pasay City, March 21-30.

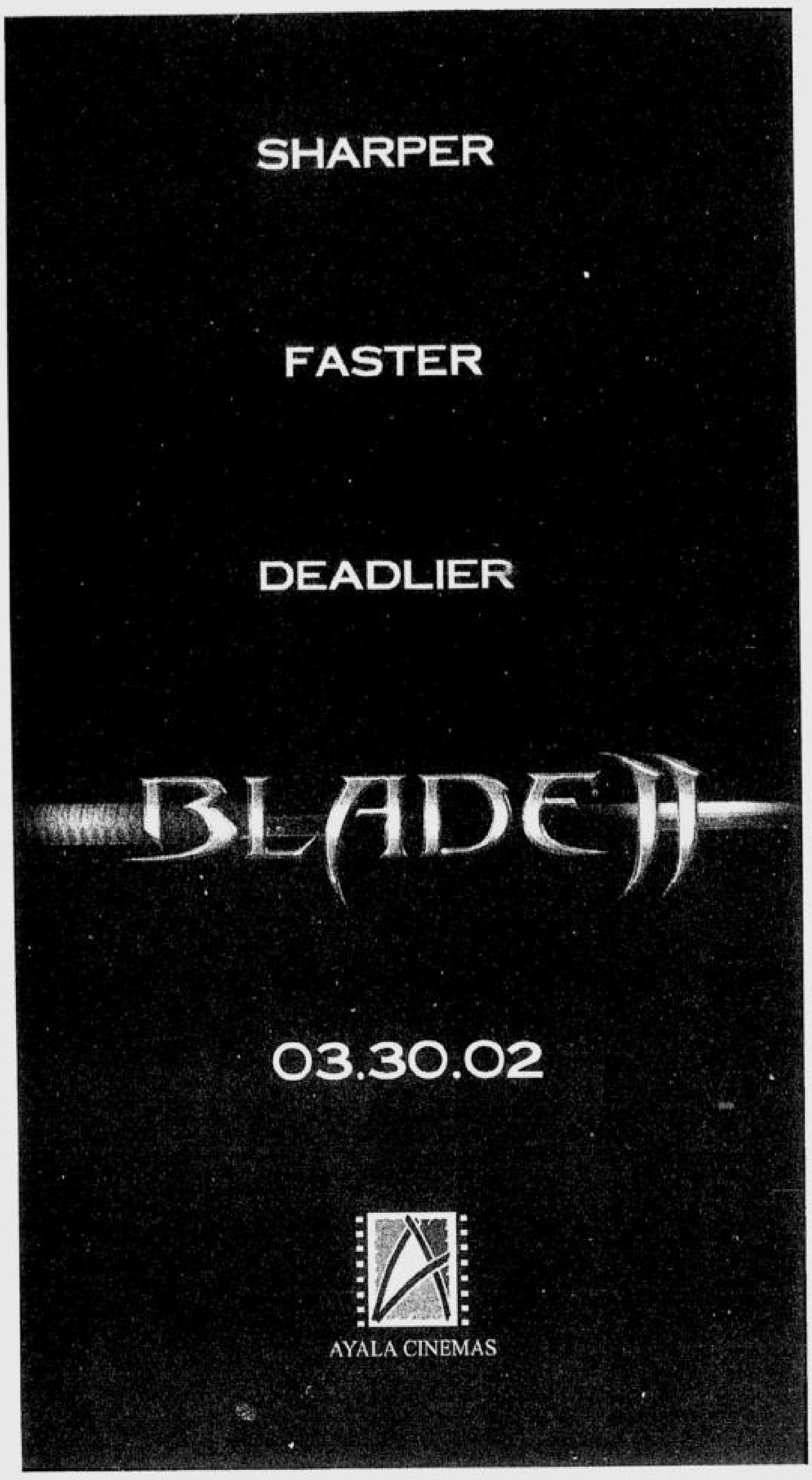
It is believed that the first *cenaculo* performed at the Malibay Plaza was in 1902, for 10 consecutive days. It was performed by a group known as Tres Caidas (referring to the three falls of Christ while carrying the Cross).

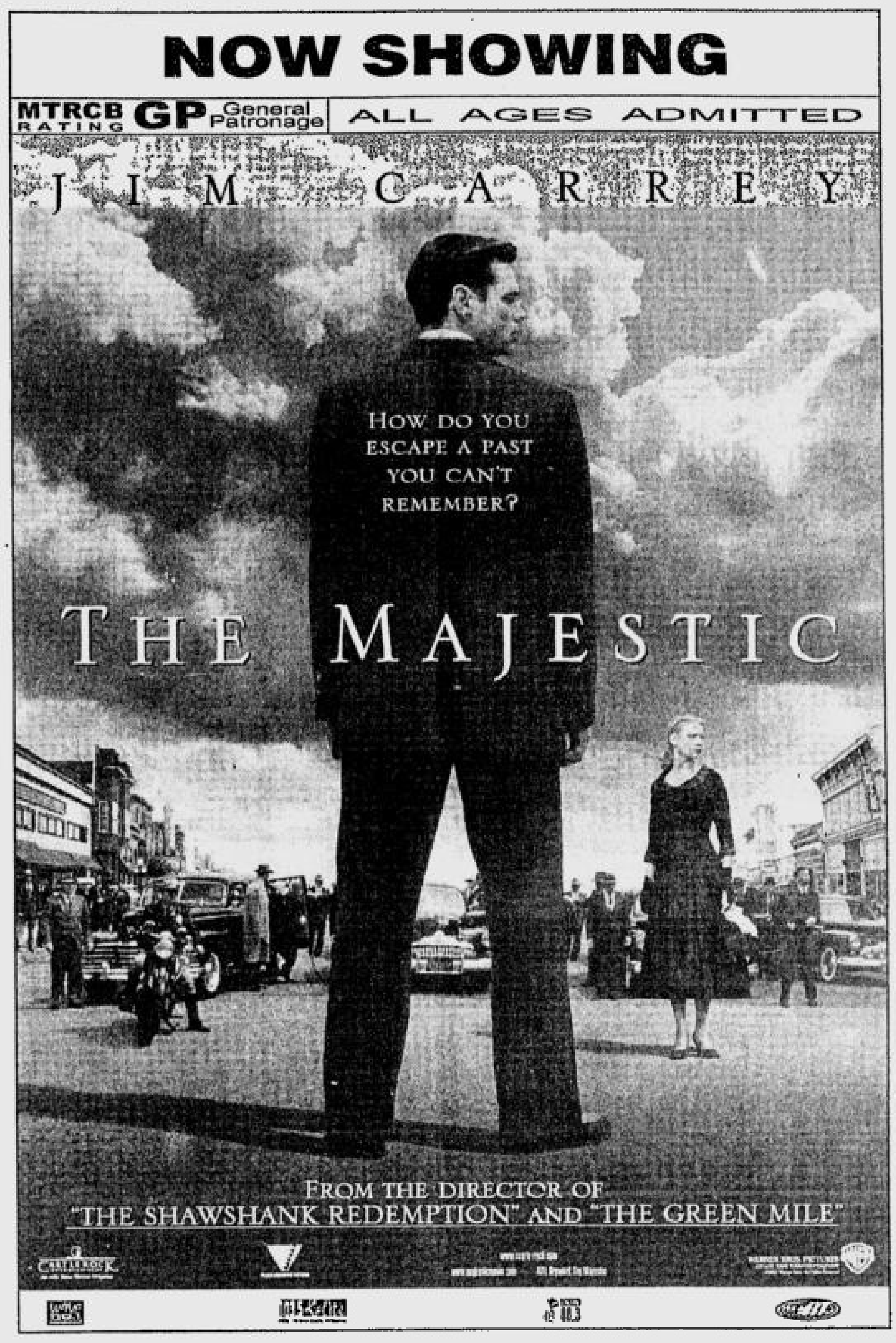
The word *cenaculo* comes from the Spanish word for cenacle or supper room. The *cenaculo* story line represents vignettes from the Bible, from Genesis in the Old Testament to the New Testament's story of the passion of Christ.

The traditional *cenaculo* originated from the "Mahal na Pasyon" (The Holy Passion) written by Gaspar Aquino de Belen in 1703. The street performance was known by different names: *sinakulo* or *pasion y muerte* (passion and death) in Rizal, Bulacan, Pampanga and Pangasinan; *kalbaryuhan* in the Tagalog region, *moriones* (centurions) in Marinduque, *tanggal* (deposition) in Bicol, *taltal* or *pagtaltal* in Guimaras and *sinakulo* in Leyte.

The present day *cenaculo* is directed by Francisco "Paking" Granada of the fourth generation of directors of the original *cenaculo* of Malibay.

Old residents of Malibay believe that the success of the *cenaculo* from 1902 to the present is due to the patronage of the town's patron saint, San Juan Nepomuceno.


SHARPER
FASTER
DEADLIER
BLADE II
03.30.02
AYALA CINEMAS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JIM CARREY
HOW DO YOU ESCAPE A PAST YOU CAN'T REMEMBER?
THE MAJESTIC
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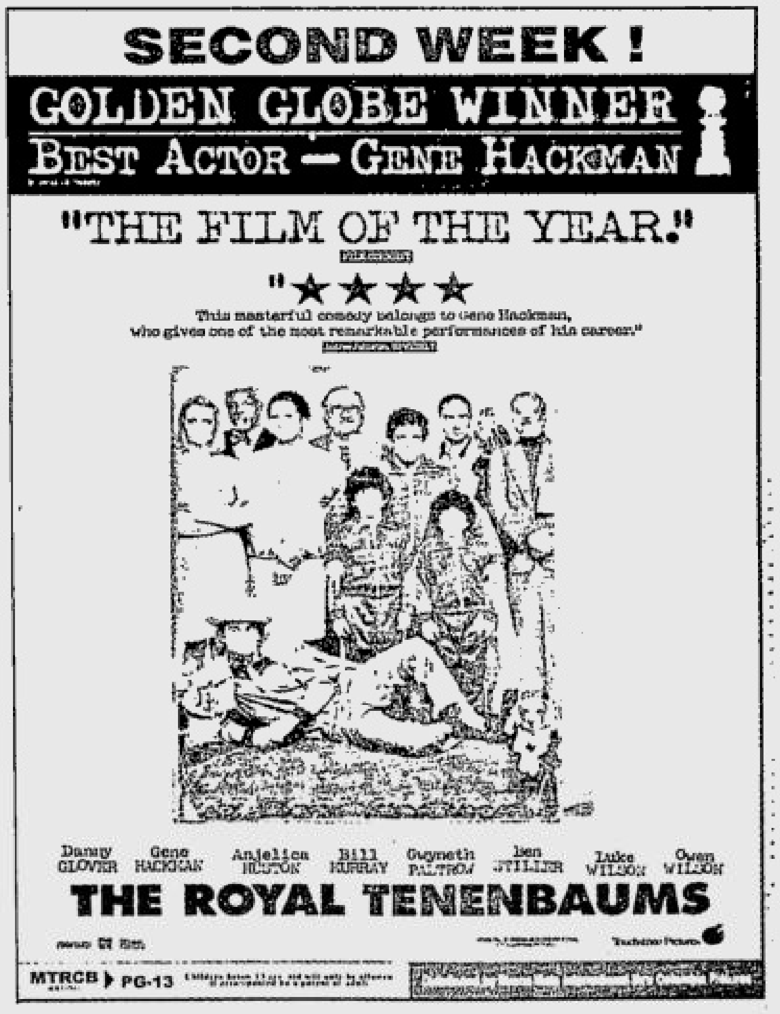
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"★★★★ This masterful comedy belongs to Gene Hackman, who gives one of the most remarkable performances of his career."
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THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS
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Jim Caviezel
Guy Pearce
Richard Harris
Prepare for Adventure.
Count on Revenge
From The Director of "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves"
The Count of Monte Cristo
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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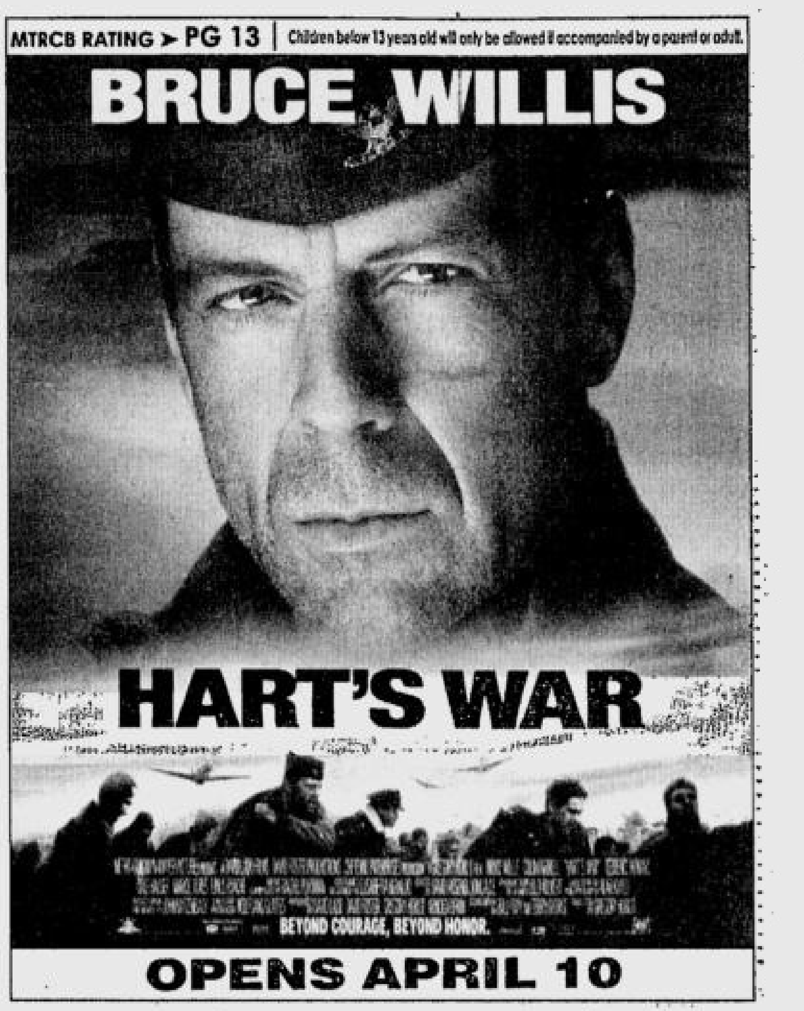
PLAYBOY
MARSHA YUEH
PLAYBOY'S CENTERFOLDS
SNAKE CHARMER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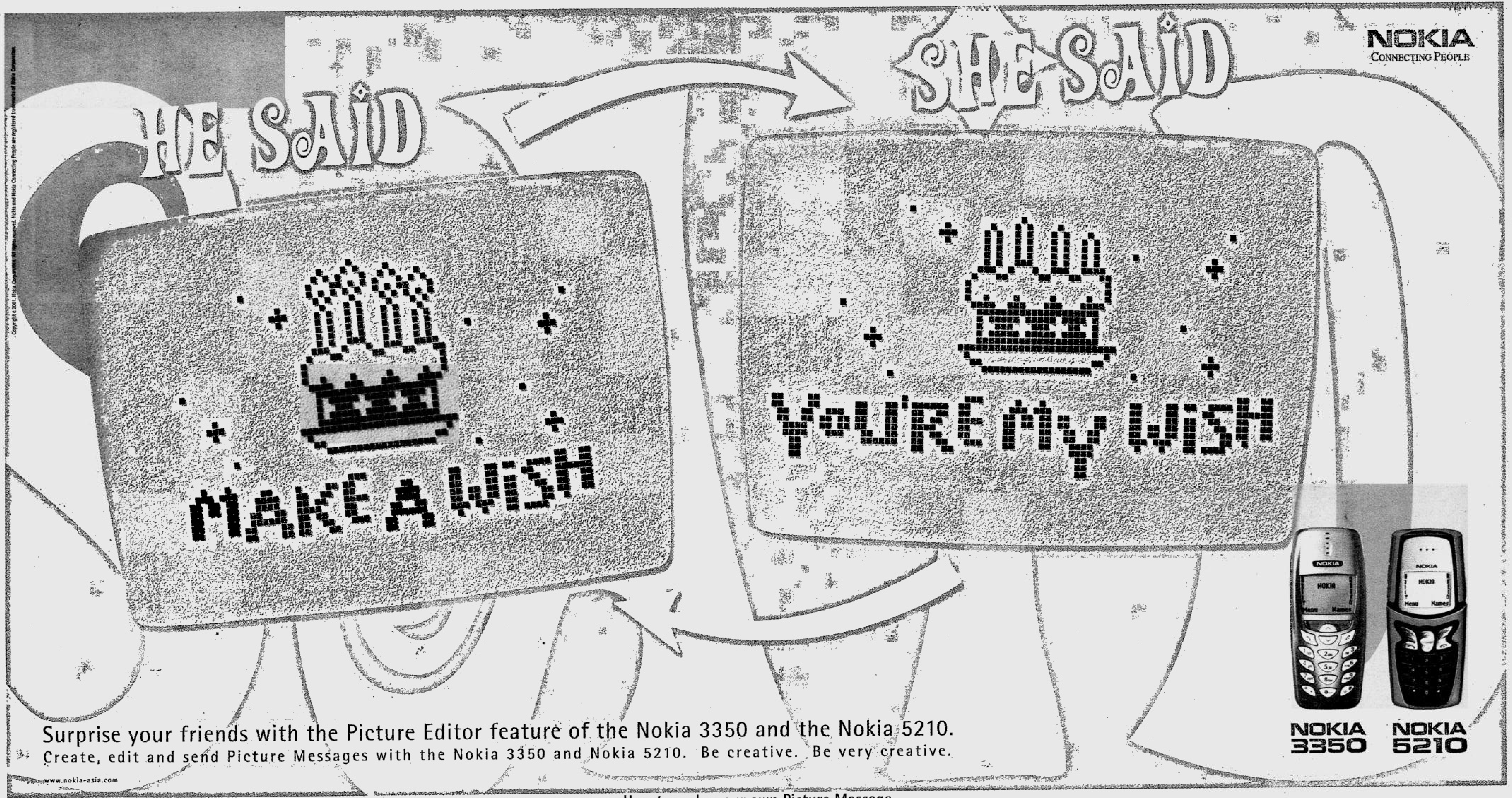
HART'S WAR
BEYOND COURAGE, BEYOND HONOR.
OPENS APRIL 10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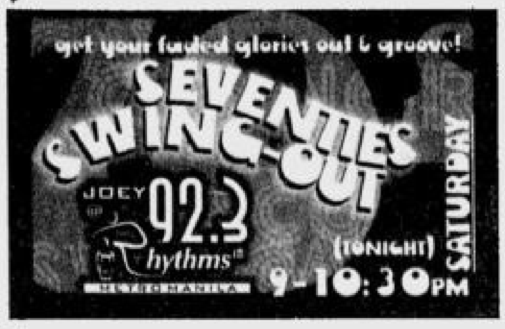

SATURDAY,
MARCH 23, 2002

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◉ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

from the decade of big hair and big hits comes your favorite dance tracks!
IN THE 80's
JOEY
92.3
Rhythms
METRO MANILA
(TONIGHT)
10:30-12MN
SATURDAY

US group seen hiking investment in RP

By Clarissa S. Batino

AMERICAN giant Cerberus Ltd. has teamed up with another US investment bank, Goldman Sachs, to take out an estimated $1 billion worth of the government's housing loan mortgage.

Karl Jackson, senior adviser to Cerberus Capital Management, yesterday said the US asset management company was prepared to invest more than $1 billion in the Philippines if there would be opportunities available to help distressed banks and other local businesses.

In a forum sponsored by the Asia Society and the Carlos P. Romulo Foundation, Jackson said Cerberus was allocating some $4 billion more in investments in Asia to support economic growth in the region.

Cerberus is managing more than $7 billion in funds in America and had invested billions in Asia, particularly in Japan and Korea.

A banking source said Goldman Sachs had also expressed its intention to put in as much as $1 billion to buy Philippine banks' bad loans and foreclosed assets.

"We have not entered into a formal agreement with Goldman Sachs but we have worked with them in other countries and there is a good chance we could do it here in the housing sector," Jackson said.

Last year, Cerberus signed a memorandum of understanding with the Macapagal administration for possible investment of $1 billion to provide liquidity to the housing sector and to distressed companies.

"We have been in discussions and progress had been made in the housing sector but nothing is completed at this point," said Jackson, who was assistant to the vice president of the United States for national security affairs in the early 1990s.

Cerberus is also exploring a joint venture with Lehman Brothers and the Government Service Insurance System to put up a $600-million asset management firm.

Jackson said the venture has not been finalized and while there had been plans to start a due diligence on the assets of GSIS, he was not sure if it had started.

The Cerberus official said the resolution of the huge bad loans of the banking sector as well as the housing sector should be a key to the Philippines' continued growth.

"It is best to resolve these problems quickly. The longer they are in limbo, the less they would be worth," Jackson said.

He agreed that the legislation of the pending bills on AMCs or special purpose asset vehicles would accelerate the resolution of the banks' bad debts and the recovery of distressed companies.

Banks' bad debts account for more than 18 percent of their total loans and are now worth more than P290 billion.

The government's housing mortgages are worth more than P50 billion, most of which are obligations of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp., an agency supposedly mandated to provide a secondary market for housing loans but was used as one of the state's lending arms for housing.

"The legislation would be very helpful. But until the legal framework is completely established, we would not see much movement on the AMCs," Jackson said.

Aside from Cerberus, Lehman Brothers, and Goldman Sachs, also active in the AMC business here are Deutsche Bank, Lone Star, Morgan Stanley and other foreign investment banks.

Lehman had signed an agreement with the country's largest, the Metrobank Group, to buy almost half or P15 billion worth of non-performing loans.

Lehman said it could invest more than $1.5 billion in the Philippines to buy bad loans and assets and to take equity in promising projects like the Malampaya natural gas securitization or similar companies.

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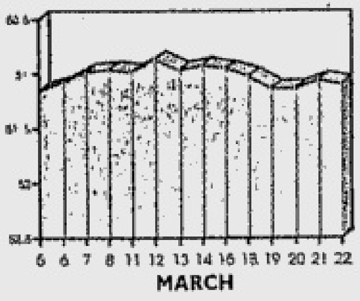


GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P51.095 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 22, 2002

¥132.32 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 22, 2002

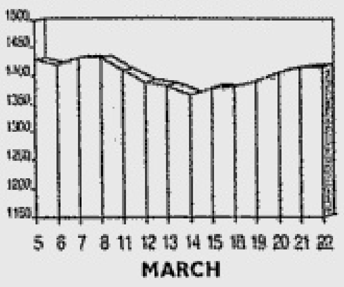
GOLD: $292.30/292.80

per ounce Hong Kong,
March 21, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Shares rise 0.2%

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices rose 0.2 percent yesterday on buying of key blue chips, dealers said.

"It's really basically just gains in Meralco (Manila Electric Co.), SM Prime Holdings and PLDT (Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.)," said Oliver Plana of Asiasec Equities Inc.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 2.28 points to 1,417.75.

Plana cited reports that the government would soon intervene in a dispute between Meralco and the government-run National Power Corp.

NPC has imposed penalties on Meralco for the latter's alleged failure to comply with a power purchase agreement.

Volume remained thin, falling to 439.3 million shares, while value rose to P528.5 million from 656.09 million shares worth P476.86 million on Thursday.

"Investors are still postponing taking positions aggressively due to the long holidays," said Mark Alan Canizares of Citiseconline.com, referring to the Easter holidays from next Thursday.

Meralco "B" rose by P1.50 to P46.50 while Meralco "A" gained 50 centavos to P30.50.

PLDT rose by P5 to P525, while SM Prime Holdings ended unchanged at P6.70.

Ayala Land Inc. gained 10 centavos to P6.90, while Bank of the Philippine Islands rose 50 centavos to P68. However, Ayala Corp. fell 10 centavos to P6.70.

AFP

Firms urged to shun banks charging high rates

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is encouraging businessmen to find other lenders if their existing bankers refuse to lower their interest rates to reflect the sharp decline in benchmark treasury bill rates.

In a meeting with the Federation of Philippines Industries during the group's annual assembly, Camacho said that companies that do not get prime rates (or T-bill rate plus 1.5 percent) should start "rethinking" their relationship with their banks. Camacho is hoping that a flight of corporate borrowers from usurious banks to fair lenders should lead to a dramatic reduction in lending rates.

While T-bill rates have been on a freefall since October last year (it hit a historic low of 5.488 percent last Monday), banks have kept their lending rates unchanged at more than 12 percent to the consternation of corporations hungry for cheap cash to keep their operations afloat.

Camacho has taken the cudgels in pulling down lending rates by mandating government financial institutions such as Development Bank of the Philippines and Land Bank of the Philippines to start bringing down their rates to between 6 and 8 percent.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura has likewise urged all local private banks to keep their margins at less than 5 percentage points over the prevailing T-bill rate.

But while retreating T-bill rates augur well for short-term lending rates, it remains to be seen whether this would have an impact on long-term lending rates. Should T-bill rates sustain their descent in the next few months, long-term rates are likely to follow suit.

The FPI expects T-bill rates to remain southbound for the rest of the year as inflation remains below the 4-percent mark. It said this showed the government's determination to bring down lending rates down and keep costs of doing business down.

Aside from bringing down interest rates, Camacho also told

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If he flies us light

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

YOU are worried, I know, about cement importers. They only make a killing in this cute business of flooding the local market with imported cement. What's the big deal?

Still, if the local makers of cement could have their evil way, they would not even allow the cement importers to rake it in. What kind of responsible corporate citizens are those cement makers, anyway?

Our government even allowed—no, ENCOURAGED (begged?)—the cement makers to put hundreds of billions of pesos in this one of the few truly local industries. They are, in other words, what we usually sneer at as "big business."

On the other hand, the poor hapless importers are running your ordinary backyard mom-and-pop, multibillion-peso business with very little capital. They only need as small an investment as the size of their brains.

Yet, the cement makers have the nerve to complain. They are asking the government to stop the flood of imported cement. Tell you, they have no conscience!

* * *

FOR if the cement makers can show just a little concern for the country, they should cut their prices right away. The cement importers have already ordered the cement makers to do so.

Over at Angel Radyo yesterday, which, according to my family, is now the best radio station in the country, a certain Napoleon Co, who has no shame in admitting he is a cement importer, says cement makers should lower their prices to P100 per bag.

That, according to Co, in his thick Chinese accent, is the right price for cement because that, according to him, in his barely comprehensible Filipino, is the cost which he claims he incurred for importing cement, honest.

If the price is right, in other words, the cement makers can stop the flood of imported cement. It's just going to be a simple price war. Thus, the cement makers can drive the cement importers out of business—through competition.

Tell me honestly, why do we deserve people like him? Hey, Nappy, there's such a thing as UNFAIR competition. Apparently, the son of his father has not heard of it.

* * *

THAT, precisely, is the point. That's the whole exercise, lasting as it did for almost two years now, with close to 4,000 workers in the cement factories already losing their jobs.

For why did the cement makers ask for help from the government to stop the flood of cement imports? It was all about unfair competition! Get it, Nappy Boy?

It's hard to call it fair competition, really, when all cement importers do is, well, to try their level best to do . . . well, basically, nothing.

They merely sit on their fat asses, watching out for flies, in case they fly right into their opened mouths. Before you know it, the shipment arrives.

And then here comes Nappy, talking about competition. Cement importers—or whatever goods, for that matter—carry no baggage flying. They always travel light.

They don't even need capital. The banks just give them letters of credit and—presto—before you know it, they are already making a killing.

In comparison, in the 1990s, when the government wooed business groups to save our cement industry, all those cement makers invested more than P100 billion.

They can't just sit in the office. They run complex factories, managing the risks that are always present in industrial plants. They employ thousands of personnel.

On top of it all, the cement makers must shoulder all the "extra" costs of doing business in this country. Survey after survey showed those, indeed, are huge costs.

Cement importers do not, but cement makers do deal with disadvantages such as high interest rates, high electricity costs and bald-faced corruption. Get it, Nappy?

* * *

SURE, cement importers are also said to be familiar with that last item. But that's all they contend with, say, in fixing their import papers and the court cases in Valenzuela.

Like it or not, importation is easy, but manufacturing is a bitch. And here comes this Nappy saying all the cement makers must do is simply to compete with him.

Nobody can deny, not even our favorite Nappy, that cement makers already went out of business. Most of the cement makers are losing a lot of money. Billions of pesos!

It's also hard to deny that cement importers are making money. Otherwise, if they are losing, they are stupid for going into the business. It's not just a hobby, okay?

Nappy dared the cement makers to engage in a price war. Good bluff! In a price war, before you know it, the cement importers can have the business all to themselves.

Look, at the prevailing price of P150 per bag, certain cement companies are losing. What more in a price war? More cement makers should only go out of business.

Soon enough, the cement makers are all gone. By then, I don't think the cement importers will continue with the price war. There's no enemy. It's fiesta time!

* * *

RIGHT now, even under the WTO rules, "dumping" is one form of unfair competition. The cement from Taiwan, Korea, Japan and Indonesia is precisely that—dumping.

It means you cannot get cement in those places at the same prices as they sell it to our beloved cement importers. Dumping means that they are willing to sell anything at very low prices, for instance, if only to avoid the goods from rotting.

And that's the story in this cement issue. For instance, during the hearing before the honoroble Tariff Commission, one importer admitted he bought cement outside for only P50 per bag. If that's not dumping, it most probably involves stolen goods.

But here is the latest in this issue. Some 25,700 metric tons of cement just arrived here from Indonesia and Japan. They were reportedly imported by Lucky Cement and Southern Cross Cement.

Know what—that shipment alone, just by itself, is already equivalent to the monthly production of either Rizal Cement (in Binangonan, Rizal), Lloyds Richfield (Danao, Cebu), or Mindanao Portland (Iligan City).

Know what's more—all those cement plants, based on documents from the BOI, are shutting down. They can't compete with the price-war freak Nappy Boy anymore.

Bourse to lose SRO status if court rules against non-broker directors

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission said it would suspend the self-regulatory status of the Philippine Stock Exchange should the eight non-broker directors who controlled the majority of the 15-member PSE board be restrained from assuming their posts.

In a press briefing late Thursday, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista told reporters that the corporate watchdog would not hesitate to suspend the SRO status of the exchange again should the courts decide to nullify the election of the eight private-sector representatives to the PSE board.

This developed as a group led by former PSE president Ramon Garcia and former PSE chair Trinidad Kalaw filed on Thursday a civil case with the Pasig Regional Trial Court seeking the ouster of the eight non-broker directors from the 15-member PSE board.

While the SEC has recognized the legitimacy of the election of the non-brokers and their legal right to exercise the right to vote for the new PSE chair, the RTC has the jurisdiction to decide on intra-corporate squabble like what has been going on at the PSE.

"We will take over but let's wait for the court to decide," Bautista replied when asked what the SEC planned to do should the courts decide in favor of Garcia and Kalaw.

The SEC last week appealed to bickering brokers to resolve the squabble that erupted when Vivian Yuchengco, the first woman president of the Makati Stock Exchange, was elected PSE chair despite the fact that her group won lesser number of board seats compared with those of rival Roberto Coyiuto's group.

Yuchengco won the chairmanship with the backing of non-broker directors who comprised the majority of the PSE board, as mandated by the securities law.

Coyiuto's group has been calling for special elections to revamp the non-broker directors, noting that these directors were not subjected to free balloting.

Garcia, for his part, complained the PSE nomination and election committee's move reducing to only eight, out of the 19 nominees, the list of candidates for the eight seats allotted for non-broker directors.

"The exclusion of plaintiff Garcia from the list of nominees in the election of non-broker directors and his disqualification as a candidate for such a position was done arbitrarily, whimsically and for no valid reason at all," said the Garcia's petition.

The exclusion of Garcia, the petition said, was a clear violation of his rights to vote and be voted for and was cited as contrary to the law, morals and the PSE bylaws.

"The elections of the defendants non-broker directors are also null and void because they were not actually elected by the stockholders of the PSE. None of them got even a single vote from the stockholders of the PSE. All of them were just deemed elected, upon recommendation of the committee, in violation and complete disregard of the PSE bylaws," the petition said.

The petition noted that the PSE bylaws' provision on board of directors indicated that the directors must be elected at the regular meeting of the exchange.

Petron, Shell corner P6.9B in Napocor supply deals

By Ronnel W. Domingo

OIL giants Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. recently cornered P6.9 billion or 97 percent of the P7.1 billion worth of National Power Corp.'s fuel oil supply contracts that were auctioned off last Monday.

Napocor fuel management department said Petron won P4.9 billion worth of contracts covering 667 million liters of bunker fuel. The supply is good for 18 months.

Pilipinas Shell, for its part, won contracts for the supply of 341 million liters of bunker fuel worth P2.2 billion.

The fuel supply contracts are largely intended for Napocor-owned and -operated plants in Bataan and Batangas. These contracts will also cover the requirements of private plants in Pangasinan and La Union, from which Napocor buys power.

The bidding held on Monday covered Napocor's fuel requirements from July this year to end-2003.

Napocor officer-in-charge/president Roland Quilala said the power firm saved about P910 million as it conducted the bidding through an electronic system.

Last month, the two firms also cornered P751 million in contracts covering the supply of a total of 96.55 million liters of diesel.

Petron won P391.5 million worth of these contracts accounting for 56.9 million liters for nine delivery points.

Shell got contracts costing P340.7 million for 48 million liters for 13 delivery points.

New industry player Subic Bay Distribution Inc. also won P19 million worth of contracts for 2.75 million liters.

Late last year, a Napocor source said that less fuel purchases were expected this year due to the commissioning of three power plants that would run on natural gas from Malampaya.

The source explained that less oil will be needed this year as Napocor would run its oil-fired power plants at less than full capacity to give priority to the operation of new gas-fed power plants.

Oakwood posts 76% occupancy

SERVICE apartment hotels are enjoying brisk business this year despite the economic slowdown as corporations and business travelers go for value for money in their lodgings and office functions.

Oakwood Premier Ayala Center general manager Peter Lucas said his service apartment posted a 76-percent occupancy rate in the first two months this year or better than the hotel industry average of 72 percent.

Lucas said Oakwood has been registering robust occupancy rates over the last six months despite the political turbulence and economic crisis. Lucas said Oakwood expected 2002 to be a tougher year than last year but it was confident of at least sustaining its past year performance.

Lucas said that since the 9-11 event, most corporations and business travelers had to contend with lower budgets for travel and lodging. He said the service apartment provides business travelers with a more affordable alternative with services and facilities comparable to luxury hotels.

Service apartments have fully furnished rooms where guests could do the cooking and laundry themselves. Lucas said Oakwood catered mainly to long-term travelers but it was steadily generating demand from short stay guests. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr*

DISLCOSURES

PHILIPPINE Seven Corp. denied having any information that could explain the 40-percent drop in its share price that fell from P6.50 to P3.60 per share.

* * *

ABACUS Consolidated Resources and Holdings Inc. denied having any information that could explain the 50-percent increase in its share price that rose from P0.50 to P0.75 per share.

* * *

BASIC Consolidated Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 31 at the AIM Conference Center, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of April 30 shall be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Manila Jockey Club Inc.** approved the increase in the company's authorized capital stock from P100 million to P500 million. The company also declared a 50-percent stock dividend.

* * *

CHINATRUST Commercial Bank Corp. announced the resignation of Jeffrey Koo Jr. and Michael Chou as members of the board. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Dizon named new PNB chair

By Clarissa S. Batino

DIZON

THE BOARD of directors of Philippine National Bank yesterday appointed banker Francisco Dizon as the new chair of the country's sixth largest lender, replacing PDIC president Norberto Nazareno who resigned even before his term expired due to health reasons.

In its regular meeting yesterday, the directors of the bank decided to accept the resignation of Nazareno who had undergone a heart bypass two weeks ago.

Sources said the government and the group of Lucio Tan were also expected to appoint soon former United Coconut Planters Bank head Lorenzo Tan as the next PNB president to replace Feliciano Miranda Jr.

Nazareno was elected chair of PNB in May 2001 after the Lucio Tan group agreed to convert part of the bank's P25-billion debt into government equity.

Given his responsibilities as president of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., Nazareno agreed to take on the role only during the transition period.

Nazareno was scheduled to step down as PNB chair once the memorandum of agreement between Tan and the government was signed. He, however, will stay director of PNB.

In its letter to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the PNB board said Dizon would assume the position of chair to serve the remaining term of Nazareno.

Dizon is a former president of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. His father Arsenio was president of PNB during the administration of the late President Diosdado Macapagal.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, March 22, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69	69	67.5	68	278,500
China Banking Corp.	600	610	600	610	1,950
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	40,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	36.5	35.5	35.5	506,800
First E-Bank Corp.	2.36	2.4	2.36	2.4	240,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44.5	44.5	43.5	44	54,000
Philippine National Bank	67	70	67	70	29,000
Phil. Savings Bank	28.5	29	27	27	1,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	10,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.25	21.5	21.25	21.5	3,200
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	100,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.36	0.38	1,030,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1350	1350	1350	1350	230
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1060	1075	1050	1075	48,190
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	35	35.5	35	35.5	62,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	800,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	785	790	785	790	9,330
Ipeople Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.06	3,400,000
Piltel	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	310,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	510	535	510	525	46,240
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	24,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30	31	30	30.5	186,800
Manila Electric Co. B	45.5	47.5	45.5	46.5	1,011,800
Petron Corp.	1.82	1.84	1.8	1.8	5,713,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.9	600,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	200,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	75,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	40,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	1.28	1.28	0.9	1	95,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.8	1.88	1.8	1.86	227,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	600,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	140,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	10,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	2,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	78,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	10,200
RFM Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.54	835,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	17,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47.5	47.5	47	47	63,100
San Miguel Corp. B	64.5	64.5	64.5	64.5	3,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.34	0.49	0.34	0.49	410,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.57	0.62	0.52	0.52	250,000
Ayala Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.7	11,348,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2	2	2	2	2,225,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1,110,000
APC Group Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.125	1,250,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.007	20,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3	3	210,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.81	0.78	0.81	16,010,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	560,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	520,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	500,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	200,000
Filinvest Dev Corp.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.24	1,162,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	31.5	31.5	30.5	31	1,593,700
Ionics Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	2,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.9	125,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	150,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.9	4,370,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	280,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	3,820,000
Music Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	2,780,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	50,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4	4.15	4	4.15	25,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	450,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	20,000
Pryce Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.08	9,500,000
Philippine Seven Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	8,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.25	13.25	13	13	61,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.53	0.5	0.52	7,030,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	35.5	36	35	36	684,700
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	775	775	775	1,850
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	50,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	770	770	770	770	2,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0006	0.0006	0.0004	0.0006	105,000,000
RFM Corp. - Pref.	4.45	4.5	4.45	4.5	6,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	4,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,100
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	11,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	420	420	420	420	50
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	6,894,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	180,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	310,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	5,010,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	1,450,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.32	2.42	2.32	2.42	16,505,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	2,893,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
SM Development Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	50,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.7	6,272,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	500,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	2,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2	2	2	2	120,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	8,800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	200,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.21	500,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	10,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	260,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	9,300,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0046	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	61,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	58,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.07	0.0725	0.07	0.07	3,900,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.175	270,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,343,270	96,272,975.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	241,983,270	293,814,570.00
PRO	40,314,000	137,469,990.00
Mining	22,080,000	1,017,600.00
OIL	132,470,000	1,046,650.00
GRAND TOTALS:	439,195,540	529,634,285.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	582.74	UP 0.69
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,923.85	DOWN 1.68
PRO	623.13	UP 5.68
Mining	1,302.83	DOWN 17.43
OIL	1.65	DOWN 0.09
All Shares Index	759.21	DOWN 12.57
Composite	1,417.75	UP 2.28

NO. OF ADVANCES: 36; NO. OF DECLINES: 35; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 44; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 115; NO. OF TRADES: 2,299

CURRENCIES

March 22, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.133273	1.000000	51.0850
Japan	Yen	0.008589	0.007579	0.3872
United Kingdom	Pound	1.616500	1.426400	72.8676
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145305	0.128217	6.5500
Switzerland	Franc	0.683847	0.603427	30.8261
Canada	Dollar	0.718535	0.634035	32.3897
Singapore	Dollar	0.619952	0.547046	27.9458
Australia	Dollar	0.603126	0.532198	27.1873
Bahrain	Dinar	3.006189	2.652661	135.5112
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302206	0.266667	13.6227
Brunei	Dollar	0.618599	0.545852	27.8848
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000101	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.026179	0.023100	1.1801
UAE	Dirham	0.308558	0.272272	13.9090
Korea	Won	0.000860	0.000759	0.0388
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.882400	45.0774
Brazil	Real	0.482654	0.425894	21.7568
Denmark	Kroner	0.134513	0.118694	6.0635
India	Rupee	0.023280	0.020542	1.0494
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.298230	0.263158	13.4434
Mexico	New Peso	0.125328	0.110589	5.6494
New Zealand	Dollar	0.499327	0.440606	22.5084
Norway	Kroner	0.129770	0.114509	5.8497
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018919	0.016694	0.8528
South Africa	Rand	0.098846	0.087222	4.4557
Sweden	Kroner	0.110944	0.097897	5.0011
Syria	Pound	0.022005	0.019417	0.9919
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032348	0.028544	1.4582
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001302	0.001149	0.0587

BIG DEMAND

ALI hikes bond float to P3B

By Doris C. Dumlao

PROPERTY giant Ayala Land Inc. has jacked up the size of its five-year bond issue to P3 billion from P2 billion to take advantage of strong investor interest in the offering.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, ALI vice president and comptroller Jaime Ysmael said the company's board approved the bigger offering after the original issue was oversubscribed by almost 100 percent.

"The higher issue amount was recommended by Ayala Land management after receiving through its issue manager and lead underwriter, BPI Capital Corp., strong interest from participating underwriters," Ysmael said.

The bonds are priced at 100 percent of face value or at par.

Ysmael said that of the P2.93-billion net proceeds expected from the issuance, about P2 billion would be used to retire maturing obligations. He said P800 million would be used for various capital expenditures and P135 million for permanent working capital.

He noted that ALI issued in 1997 a total of P6 billion in long-term commercial papers, P4 billion of which matured and was fully paid last March 19 while the balance of P2 billion would mature on April 23.

ALI is likewise working on funding several ongoing and proposed development projects with total capital expenditures of P4.2 billion for this year as against the P2.5 billion spent in 2001, optimistic of the improving economic environment.

The property company will soon jumpstart the construction of a P4.7-billion shopping mall in Taguig—named Market! Market!—which will cater to lower-to-middle segments of the retail market. This is located on a 10-hectare lot along C-5 road acquired by ALI from the Bases Conversion and Development Authority. The new mall will open for business in 2004.

ALI is also set to develop within the year a transportation and terminal complex inside the property to link north and south of Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, other priority projects for the year include the One Legazpi residential tower and the Greenbelt redevelopment projects.

Firms urged . . .

From page B1

FPI members that the government was keen on developing a long-term IOU market by spurring the development of a domestic capital market through the passage of the Securitization Act, which would promote asset-backed financing; elimination of documentary stamp tax on secondary trading of debt instruments; enactment of the Personal Equity Retirement Act (Pera) bill to encourage individuals to save, and the Revised Investment Company Act to build a strong mutual fund industry.

Makati condo head faces charges of fund misuse

THE PRESIDENT of upscale One Lafayette Square Condominium Corp. (OLS) in Salcedo Village, Makati, is facing charges of illegal disbursement of association funds hurled by a group of several building homeowners.

A group of businessmen under the holding company Project & Land Inc. and academician Angel Abaya have filed with the Makati City prosecution office on Feb. 22 a motion to reconsider their two separate petitions to put on trial Cecilia Custodio on qualified theft and/or estafa and misappropriation of funds, court documents showed.

Also included in the complaints was former OLS treasurer Eric Co, who allegedly authorized payment for the questioned transactions.

One of the petitions also included as respondent a certain Linda Borres, who was reportedly the beneficiary of a P60,000 check allegedly issued for auditing fees but later turned out to be Custodio's housemaid. The transaction, according to the complainants, was thus "imaginary."

"What is clear from the evidence on record is that the amount of P60,000 was withdrawn from the funds of the OLS Condominium Association in the guise of payment for purported audit services allegedly conducted by respondent Borres, a person who was not entitled to receive the same," the first petition said.

The other petition included one Richard Queque, Custodio's security guard and beneficiary of P99,000 worth of checks issued for the purchase of emergency lights but the alleged seller, Buendia Electrical, was claimed to be nonexistent.

Doris C. Dumlao

Bank loans down 3.2% in January

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday that the volume of loans made by commercial banks continued to trend down in January, lower by 3.2 percent compared with a year earlier.

Outstanding loans by commercial banks at the end of January stood at P1.38 trillion, the central bank said in a statement.

"Lending activities of banks have been restrained as they become more circumspect due in part to the increasing levels of non-performing loans combined with weak corporate demand due to the presence of spare capacity in the manufacturing sector and still weak global economic conditions," it said.

The ratio of non-performing loans (NPLs) to total loans of commercial banks rose to 18.3 percent at the end of January from 17.35 percent a month earlier.

Lending activity of banks has been on a declining trend since August 2001, the central bank said.

December loan volumes were down 3.6 percent versus a year ago.

Bangko Sentral officials have said they hope for a rebound in commercial bank lending, after rate cuts totaling 800 basis points since December 2000 and a restoration of commercial banks' reserve requirements to pre-July 2001 levels.

Reuters

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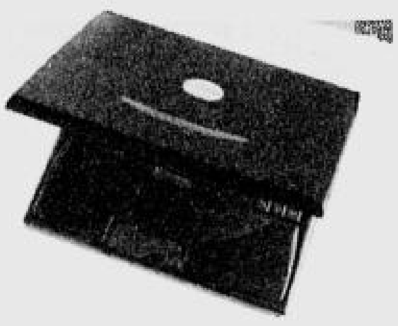

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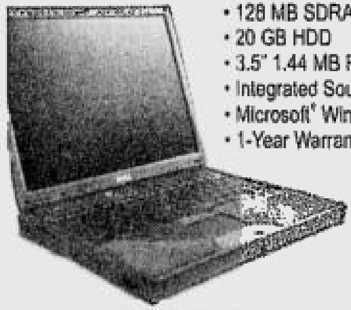

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Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City 100 Philippines
Tel. No. 925-2401

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine Heart Center (PHC) invites sealed written bids for six (6) months (July-December 2002) contract Pharma Medical/Laboratory and Foodstuffs Supplies.

Only duly accredited bidders/suppliers will be allowed to participate in the bidding. List of the requirements to be submitted:

1. Letter of Intent
2. SEC Registration
3. Business License
4. License to Operate (BFAD)
5. Financial Statement (last 2 years)
6. ITR (last 2 years)
7. DOH Accreditation
8. Location Map of Office
9. List of Clients

All interested bidders/suppliers must submit their accreditation documents on or before April 15, 2002 at Purchasing Division.

The PHC serves the right to disqualify any prospective bidder/s if found if they have submitted falsified documents and/or information the right to accept or reject any bid, and annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.

(Sgd.) ROMEO J. SANTOS, M.D.
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI – Mar. 22, 23, 24, 28, 31 & Apr. 1, 2002)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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Rush Grge Sale 09196541403

AUCTION SALE

Nuestra-Damus Pawnshop Makati City Auction Sale on April 6, 2002 all unredeemed pledges during the month of November 1-30, 2001. Nuestra Br. II Pio-9:30am; Nuestra Br. I-10:30am; Nuestra Br. VI-11:30am; Damus Pasong Tamo-12:30pm; Nuestra Main JP-1:30pm; Nuestra Br. IX Zapote 3:00pm.
Sons of J. Lanuza
Auctioneer

NUESTRA-DIAJADE PAWNSHOP LAS PINAS & PARANAQUE METRO MANILA Will have its auction sale on April 8, 2002. All unredeemed pledges during the month of November 1-30, 2001. Diajade Main-9:30am; Diajade Br. II 10:30am; Nuestra Br. III-11:30am; Diajade Br. I-1:00pm; Nuestra Alamanza 2:00pm.
Sons of J. Lanuza
Auctioneer

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

Stargem Pawnshop 26-A E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave. Q.C. We Sell All Expired Pledges on April 1, 2002 at 9AM J. Enriquez Lic. Auctioneer

Unigem Pawnshop 3-E N. Ramirez St. Q.C. We Sell All Expired Pledges on April 1, 2002 at 9AM J. Enriquez Lic. Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of late Felipe N. De Guzman was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 323 Page 66 Book I Series of 2002 before Notary Public Lydia Bundac of Paranaque PDI-March 9, 16 & 23, 2002

Notice is hereby given that estate of the late Betty C. Tiu has been the subject of extrajudicial settlement of estate among heirs with waiver of rights under Doc No. 457, Page No. 092, Book No. XIV, Series of 2002 in the notarial registry of Atty. Jose V. Marcelle. (PDI-Mar. 9, 16 & 23 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Ayala Land LTCP Cert.#6-0068686 in the name of Alfonso J. Araullo (PDI-Mar.23, Apr.6 & 13,2002)

Notice is given that Orchard Golf & Country Club Certificate #0-0163 under the name of Anthony Samuel Uy Lee has been declared lost (PDI-Mar. 9,16 & 23 2002)

Notice is hereby given that based on the affidavit of Loss of Mr. Henry Lo Lim SM Prime Holdings Inc. Stock Cert 0080951 Empire East Land Holdings Inc. Stock Cert 105027 Ayala Land Inc. Stock Cert 19543 Metro Pacific Corp. (Formerly Metro Drug Inc.) Stock Cert. 0127277 Manila Electric Co. Stock Cert Nos 283091 & 291502 issued in the name of Henry Lo Lim have been reported Loss. (PDI-Mar. 9, 16, & 23 2002)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
Pambansang Korporasyon Sa Elektrisidad
(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

SLT-2002-04B

The Southern Luzon Transco (SLT), NPC wishes to invite interested parties to prequalify and to bid on the items listed below:

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER
DATE OF BIDDING: APRIL 22, 2002; 2:00 PM			
A1	1 LOT	TIRE (OUTER CASING), TUBE (INNER CASING)	3CSA02-004
A2	1 LOT	BOOTS (RUBBER), RAINCOAT, GLOVES	3CSA02-033
A3	8 PAIRS	SHOES, SAFETY	3ASS02-037
A4	25 PAIRS	SHOES, SAFETY	3ATL02-038
A5	1 LOT	CORK GASKET, ANUNCIATOR BOARD, GLOBE VALVE	3OPO01-010
A6	1 LOT	HP CARTRIDGE, ERASER, ACETATE FOLDER	3PTO02-036
DATE OF BIDDING: APRIL 23, 2002; 2:00 PM			
B1	4 UNITS	AIR CONDITIONING UNITS	3ADM02-026
B2	1 LOT	REFIL (FIRE EXTINGUISHERS), AND FIRE EXTINGUISHERS	3A3002-033
B3	49 UNITS	CENTRAL PROCESSING UNITS (CPU)	3PTG02-032
B4	1 LOT	RENTAL OF COPYING MACHINE	3ADM01-0211
DATE OF BIDDING: APRIL 24, 2002; 2:00 PM			
C1	1 LOT	BUS SUPPORT, POST INSULATOR CONDUCTOR ALUMINUM	3MAK02-160
C2	1 LOT	JO: SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATERIALS FOR THE REPAIR/RESTORATION OF DELUGE VALVE CONTROL PIPING CIRCUIT AND SPRINKLE SPRAY SYSTEM AT PLANT E	3MAK02-122
C3	1 LOT	JO: SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATERIALS FOR THE REPAIR/RESTORATION OF DELUGE VALVE CONTROL PIPING CIRCUIT AND SPRINKLE SPRAY SYSTEM AT PLANT D	3MAK02-123
C4	1 LOT	JO: PAGING SYSTEM AT PLANT A	3MAK01-532
C5	1 LOT	AIRCON WINDOW TYPE, BED & MATTRESS	INGP02-015

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules on:

1) C2 - **April 15, 2002**; 10:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room
2) C3 - **April 15, 2002**; 11:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room

Schedules C1-C5 bidding shall be handled by GENCO-6 Materials Management Section. Bid documents can be obtained from their office at San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna.

Complete sets of bidding documents and other particulars may be obtained from the Office of the Manager, Administration Division, SLRC, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P25.00 and P50.00 per schedule for single and two envelope, respectively starting **April 01, 2002.** No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Non-accredited suppliers can get prequalification papers and submit the same for evaluation not later than **April 15, 2002** before they are allowed to bid.

Only those prequalified shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Bids will be received at the SLRC Bidding Room, NPC-SLRC, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna until 2:00 o'clock p.m. on the dates specified above after which said bids will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

All bids regardless of price offer must be accompanied by Bidder's Bond in Cash or Certified Manager's/Cashier's Check, or a GSIS Surety Bond equivalent to five percent (5%) of the total bid price.

The NPC-SLRC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the NPC-SLRC's action.

(Sgd) **R.D. RAMAS**
MANAGER, ADMINISTRATION
TRANSCO SOUTH

(PDI - March 23, 2002)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested sack manufacturers registered with SEC/DTI to participate in the bidding for the Supply and Delivery of Polypropylene Empty Sacks of the agency as follows:

MTS Type	Quantity (Pcs.)
Procurement	5,700,000
Distribution	4,400,000
Corn	400,000
Total	10,500,000

Bidders representative shall be limited to the owner/stockholder/official/employees of the manufacturing company/corporation duly authorized to represent the same. The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

March 25, 26, April 1 & 2, 2002	-	Issuance of List of Pre-qualification Requirements
April 3, 4 & 5, 2002	-	Submission of Pre-qualification Documents/Requirements
April 16, 2002 (10:00 AM)	-	Pre-bidding Conference/ Payment of Application Fee/ Issuance of Tender Forms
April 22, 2002 (9:15 - 10:00 AM) (10:15 AM)	-	Submission of Bid Proposals Opening of Bid Proposals

Venue of the pre-bidding conference, submission and opening of bids shall be at the NFA Central Office Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Building, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.

Pre-qualification forms and requirements of the bidding can be secured from and submitted to BAC Secretariat, ODAFA, 7th Floor, NFA-Central Office. Bidding documents/Tender forms may likewise be secured from BAC Secretariat and the same shall be issued to pre-qualified bidders upon payment of P5,000.00 non-transferable/non-refundable application/bidding fee.

For inquiries, please contact the BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos. 712-0453 and 712-3341 local 8702-8704.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY/INFORMALITY OF THE BIDS RECEIVED AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) **MICHAEL ANGELO G. PADERANGA**
Deputy Administrator & Chairman, BAC

(PDI -- Mar. 23 & 25, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT
PROCUREMENT SERVICE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Inter-Agency Bids and Award Committee (IABAC) of the **Procurement Service, Department of Budget and Management** is inviting interested bidders for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF FIREARMS** for the BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY.

A pre-bid conference will be held on **April 2, 2002 at 9:30 AM** at the Conference Room of the Procurement Service - DBM, at Cristobal Street, Paco, Manila.

Bid documents are available at the PS Purchasing Division. Sealed bids must be submitted not later than **2:00 PM April 16, 2002** after which the same will be opened in the presence of the bidders.

(Sgd.) **ESTANISLAO C. GRANADOS, JR.**
Director

(PDI--March 23 & 24, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
Quezon City
INVITATION TO BID
REAL ESTATE DEPARTMENT

The Social Security System is inviting offers to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties:

LIST OF SSS ACQUIRED ASSETS FOR PUBLIC BIDDING ON 19 APRIL 2002

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION OF PROPERTY	MINIMUM BID/ SELLING PRICE
1.	120 sq.m. TCT No. 411004 w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 23-A Morning Star Street, Monterey Hills, San Mateo, Rizal	P342,400.00
2.	120 sq.m. TCT No. T-943184 w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 26 Blk. 10 Georgetown Heights, Molino, Bacoor, Cavite	387,600.00
3.	120 sq.m. TCT No. 413519 w/ 4BR and 2 T&B Fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 1 Blk. 10 Skylane (Peaceful Lane) Monterey Subd., San Mateo, Rizal	773,900.00
4.	121 sq.m. TCT No. 407868 w/ 3BR and 1T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 4 Blk. 12 Marvi Hills Subd., Ampid, San Mateo, Rizal	661,100.00
5.	269 sq.m. TCT No. T-348485 (M)	Lot 21 Blk. 2 Bernardo Subd. (Tubigan) Gaya-gaya, San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan	578,000.00
6.	300 sq.m. TCT No. 211568 w/ 3BR and 1T&B deteriorated bungalow	Lot 75 Blk. I-A #75 Eastridge Diamond Park Victoria Homes, Tunasan, Muntinlupa City	979,700.00
7.	136 sq.m. TCT No. 2559 cannibalized 1-storey residence	Lot 10 Blk. 2 Hazel St., Piedra Blanca, Antipolo City	270,100.00
8.	195 sq.m. TCT 412785 2-storey house for total renovation	Lot 9 Blk. 2 Villa Nila Homes, Parang, Marikina City	487,500.00
9.	252 sq.m. TCT No. M-95566 w/ 1BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 6 Blk. 23 4th MERALCO Housing Binangonan, Rizal	901,500.00
10.	180 sq.m. TCT # T-356983 (M) w/ 4BR and 1T&B deteriorated 1-storey bungalow	Lot 14 Blk. 5, Planas Subd. Bo. Cayslo, Sta. Maria, Bulacan	174,400.00
11.	81 sq.m. TCT No. C-346647 w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 15 Blk. 10 Villa Magdalena II, Novaliches, Quezon City	395,100.00
12.	134 sq.m. TCT No. 409378 w/ 1BR and 1 T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 10-A Sagultarius St., Life Homes Subd., Ampid, San Mateo, Rizal	431,600.00
13.	169 sq.m. TCT No. 409379 w/ 2BR and 1 T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 1-C-10-B-5-D Espiritu Cmpd., Poblacion, Montalban, Rizal	473,000.00
14.	115 sq.m. TCT No. 412784 w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 22-A-2 #99-A Champagnat St., Marikina Heights, Marikina City	601,400.00
15.	94 sq.m. TCT No. 661299 w/ 2BR and 1 T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot A-1-A Xylomelum St., Pasig Green Park Village, Cainta, Rizal	584,800.00
16.	170 sq.m. TCT 661298 w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 25 Blk. 6 Daisy St., Cainta Greenland Subd., Cainta, Rizal	777,900.00
17.	543 sq.m. TCT No. M-37808 w/ 4BR and 2 T&B deteriorated 1-storey duplex	No. 176 J.P. Rizal Ave., Bo. Sampaloc, Tanay, Rizal	783,800.00
18.	120 sq.m. TCT 490931-R w/ 2BR and 1 T&B fairly maintained bungalow	No. 26 Bartolomew L46 B3 Villa Julita Subd., San Fernando, Pampanga	538,200.00
19.	264 sq.m. TCT No. 500249-R cannibalized bungalow	Lot 18 Blk. 16 Hizon Street, Mamatitang, Mabalacat, Pampanga	181,800.00
20.	216 sq.m. TCT No. 500237-R w/ 2BR and 1 T&B deteriorated 1-storey residential	No. 2843 Yellowbell Street, Brgy. Village, Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga	194,300.00
21.	450 sq.m. TCT No. 498442-R w/ 4BR and 1T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 1600-A Joven St., Babo Sacan, Porac, Pampanga	467,600.00
22.	200 sq.m. TCT No. 385791-R w/ 2BR and 2T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	Lot 9 Blk. 2 St. Anthony Subd. Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	454,000.00
23.	153 sq.m. TCT No. 498751-R w/ 3BR and 2T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	Jasmin St., Purok Gloria II Subd. Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	306,400.00
24.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 500246-R w/ 4BR and 2T&B fairly maintained 1-storey duplex	No. 6085 A&B Ubas St., Dau Homesite, Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga	315,900.00
25.	214 sq.m. TCT No. 490932-R poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	Purok Gloria Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	227,700.00
26.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 494055-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B fairly maintained 1-storey single unit	Lot 5 Blk. 69 Lanzones Street, Dau Homesite, Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga	331,900.00
27.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 382186-R w/ 4BR and 2T&B fairly maintained bungalow	No. 33 & 34 Orchid St., Purisima Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	328,700.00
28.	204 sq.m. TCT No. 488348-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 10 Blk. 13 Doña Anastacia Subd., Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga	270,500.00
29.	229 sq.m. TCT No. 477786-R w/ 4BR and 2T&B fairly maintained 1-storey duplex	Lot 39-B Blk. 6 Golden Land Subd., Mabiga, Mabalacat, Pampanga	683,500.00
30.	168 sq.m. TCT No. 494067-R w/ 4BR and 2T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	#143 & 145 Dama De Noche St., Purok Gloria Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	326,100.00
31.	350 sq.m. TCT No. 492553-R w/ 4BR and 1T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	Lot 13 Blk. 7 Airmens Subd., Mauaque, Mabalacat, Pampanga	584,000.00
32.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 496567-R w/ 3BR and 2T&B fairly maintained 1-storey residential	#6099 Matiyaga cor. Lanzones St., L1 B62 Duquit, Dau Homesite, Mabalacat, Pampanga	347,200.00
33.	160 sq.m. TCT No. 493588-R w/ 4BR and 2T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	#123&125 Dama De Noche [illegible] L3826-I-3 Purok Gloria Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	315,100.00
34.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 492224-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 24 Blk. 53 Malusog St., Dau Homesite, Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga	377,000.00
35.	150 sq.m. TCT No. 118499 fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 33 Blk. 42 Dagohoy St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City	740,800.00
36.	165 sq.m. TCT No. 118390 w/ 3BR and 3T&B fairly maintained 1-storey apartment	Lot 11-A Macapagal St., Belen Homesite, Angeles City	482,100.00
37.	164 sq.m. TCT No. 117953 Lot only	Lot 11-A Don Bonifacio Subd., Angeles City	328,000.00
38.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 496871-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	No. 99 Camia St., Purok Gloria Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	210,900.00
39.	120 sq.m. TCT No. 498752-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B deteriorated 1-storey residential	Lot 8 Blk. 3 Sto. Domingo Subd., San Fernando, Pampanga	292,000.00
40.	260 sq.m. TCT No. 501962-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 5 Blk. 3 Sta. Maria Homesite Subd., Mabalacat, Pampanga	265,700.00
41.	183 sq.m. TCT No. 493586-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 4 Blk. 4 G. Silang St., Maimpis, San Fernando, Pampanga	281,500.00
42.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 498753-R w/ 2BR and 2T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Los 26-A Blk. 21 Kalayaan Village, San Fernando, Pampanga	524,500.00
43.	153 sq.m. TCT No. 501983-R w/ 2BR and 2T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	No. 167/169 Jasmin St., Purok Gloria II Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	249,200.00
44.	257 sq.m. TCT No. 497182-R w/ 2BR and 1T&B fairly maintained bungalow	Lot 1 Blk. 7 Lamens Village, Mabiga, Mabalacat, Pampanga	394,500.00
45.	180 sq.m. TCT No. 496872-R w/ 2BR and 2T&B poorly maintained 1-storey duplex	Ilang-Ilang St., Purok Gloria Subd., Sindalan, San Fernando, Pampanga	285,000.00
		TOTAL	**P20,107,700.00**

Complete description of the properties including Bidding Forms and Instructions to Bidders are available at the Real Estate Department, 5th Floor, SSS Building, East Avenue, Quezon City. Please contact Mr. Tomas M. Ramirez at Telephone No. 920-64-01 local 5122 to 5128.

Sealed bids should be dropped at the Bid Box located at the Real Estate Department, 5th Floor, SSS Building, Quezon City, from 8:00 A.M. to 1:59 P.M. on 19 April 2002. The bids should be labeled Acquired Assets Disposal Committee, Social Security System, East Avenue, Quezon City.

Bidder's deposit, equivalent to at least 10% of the bid price in cash (Philippine money/ U.S. dollar) or in Certified Managers/Cashier's Check in favor of SSS must be enclosed with the sealed bid. (Any other form or draft purportedly as manner of payment is not acceptable). The bidder must also sign the sealed envelope across its flap. Sealed bid without the bidder's bond will not be entertained.

The Award shall be granted to the highest bidder.

The sale of the properties shall be "As Is, Where Is" and the winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of the SSS.

After deducting the bid deposit from the Bid Price, the balance shall be payable in cash within 30 days or an option to amortize within 12 months at 13% rate of interest per annum compounded monthly upon receipt of notice of approval.

The system reserved the right to reject any or all bids, or to waive any defect found therein.

All awards shall be subject to the approval of the Social Security Commission whose decision shall be final and binding on all concerned.

(Sgd.) **AVP ANTONETTE L. FERNANDEZ**
Vice-Chairperson
Acquired Assets Disposal Committee

(PDI--Mar. 23 & 24, 2002)

BANTAY BATA 163

ABS-CBN Foundation's
BANTAY BATA 163
Has immediate openings for:

EDUCATION / ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

- Male or female College graduate at least 25 years old
- Loves children and has genuine concern for them
- Creative and has good background in art, crafts and music
- Must have very good communication skills
- Willing to learn new approaches to learning and creative work
- With initiative and leadership skills

SOCIAL WORKER

- Licensed Social Worker
- At least 2 years experience in child welfare and case management
- With strong background in family and child counseling
- Must have extensive networking skills with government agencies and NGOs
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English

All applicants' letters complete with resumé, 2x2 picture, transcript of records & other credentials must be submitted not later than March 26, 2002 to:

THE HR MANAGER
ABS-CBN FOUNDATION, INC.
Mother Ignacia corner E. Lopez St., Quezon City

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BAÑOS
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for the public bidding (rebid) of X-Ray Detection System for Foreign Substances in Fresh Fruits consisting:

1)	X-ray unit	1 set
2)	X-ray line sensor	1 set
3)	Foreign substance detection unit	
4)	Utility	
5)	Central control unit	1 set
6)	Operation panel	1 set
7)	Carrying conveyor	1 set
8)	Casing	1 set
9)	Reject system	1 set
10)	TV monitor	1 set
11)	UPS	1 set

The schedule of the bidding activities is as follows:

Particulars	Date/Time	Place
Pre-qualification	April 1-3 / 8:30AM - 5:00PM	SPMO
Issuance of Bid Documents	April 4-8 / 8:30AM - 5:00PM	SPMO
Pre-bid conference	April 19 Fri. / 10:00AM	SPMO
Opening/submission of bids	April 26 Fri. / 10:00AM	SPMO

Interested parties may secure the checklist of pre-qualification requirements and submit pre-qualification documents to the Supply & Property Management Office (SPMO).

Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to secure bid documents from SPMO and participate in the bidding process.

The UPLB reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the UPLB. The UPLB likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **DR. TERESITA M. ESPINO**
Chair, PBAC

(PDI - March 22 & 23, 2002)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Republic of the Philippines
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines

Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim
Office of the Undersecretary

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education through the National Educational Testing and Research Center (NETRC) is inviting all printers to print classified materials (testbooklets) to be used in the National Diagnostic Test to be administered by the NETRC for Grade III and First Year student on June 20, 2002.

All interested printers must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining bid documents starting March 25, 2002 at the BAC Secretariat Office, Room 112-A, Mabini Building, DepEd Complex, Pasig City or visit the DepEd website at http://www.decs.gov.ph

A pre-bid conference will be held on April 4, 2002, 10:00 AM at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, DepEd Complex, Pasig City. The Submission and Opening of Bids will be on April 18, 2002 at the same time and place mentioned above.

DepEd-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO S. PANGAN**
Undersecretary
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – Mar. 23 & 31, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cagayan
Municipality of Baggao
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ADVERTISEMENT TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

THIS IS TO INVITE all interested bidders to come for pre-qualification for the purchase of:

1. One (1) unit Reconditioned KOBELCO SK 045 Hydraulic Excavator powered by a ISUZU 4BD1 Diesel Engine. Equipped with a 0.45 cu.m. Backhoe bucket.

Pre-qualification of bidders will be on **April 2, 2002**, 10:00 AM at Baggao Town Hall. Bidding will follow right after the pre-qualification at the same venue.

Interested bidders shall bring with them the following documents for pre-qualification purposes.

1. Mayor's Permit
2. Certificate of Registration/Business Name
3. Latest Financial Statement
4. VAT/Non-VAT Registration Certificate

All the above documents shall be presented in their original copy.

Bidders are required to pose their bidders bond (cash) equivalent to five percent of their total bid.

Representatives of dealers/suppliers are obliged to bring with them their special power of attorney.

(Sgd.) **LEONARDO C. PATTUNG, M.D.**
Municipal Mayor

(PDI -- Mar. 23, 2002)

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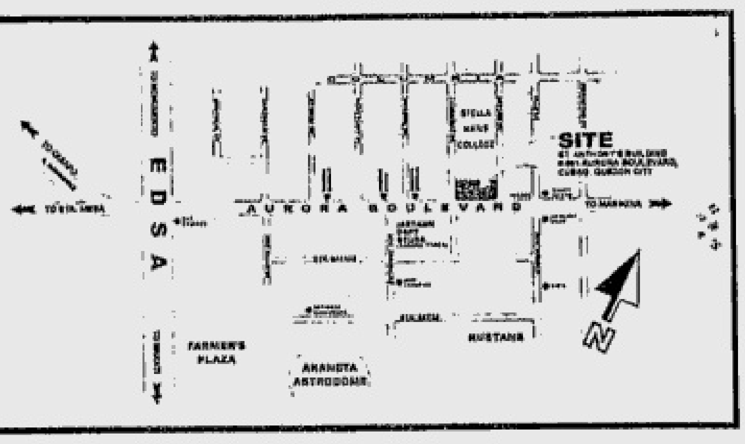


Cost of chuckles, giggles, guffaws rises 2.9% over last 12 months

NEW YORK—The price of chuckles, giggles, guffaws and outright hilarity rose 2.9 percent over the last 12 months, according to the tongue-in-cheek Cost of Laughing Index for 2002.

Malcolm Kushner, the attorney turned humor consultant who developed the index, found the rise in the cost of laughter during a recession perplexing.

Was scarcity a factor? Did the demand for laughs outstrip supply in a time of war?

Though not included in the index, Andersen, the accounting firm that is facing criminal charges in connection with the collapse of energy trading giant Enron, found the year to be humor-free.

But the price of jokes at Andersen's expense, notably by late-night television comics, has proven costly. On Wednesday, Andersen published a full-page ad in The New York Times—at a likely cost of $137,000—to acknowledge the "tough place" it found itself in, while confessing that it was unable to find "the humor" in its situation.

The US government's consumer price index rose 1.1 percent over the comparable 12-month period. So the cost of jokes rose at a stronger pace than consumer prices for food, clothing and other goods.

While the survey didn't specify whether the quality of jokes had improved along with the price, one of America's leading humorists said his jokes had become a better value.

One of the hottest books just off the humor presses, Calvin Trillin's "Tepper Isn't Going Out," a novel exploring the connection between a man and his parking space, is priced at $22.95, up nearly 15 percent from the price of Trillin's previous book, "Family Man," published in 1998.

But Trillin says there is more to this ostensible price increase than what meets the eye.

"I want to say that this new book—a bargain at $22.95—has more jokes in it than the last book," the Kansas-born author and longtime New Yorker writer told Reuters. "So this book, I would say, is actually cheaper than the last book. It depends how you measure." *Reuters*

Asia trade rides coattails of US rebound

SINGAPORE—Trade, Asia's economic engine, will once again pull the region up by its bootstraps this year as appetite for exports recovers along with the US economy, according to a region-wide Reuters survey.

Thirteen polls, covering more than 100 economists, showed higher trade surplus forecasts for most Asian economies, compared with a previous poll conducted in December.

Countries highly exposed to information technology and electronics exports such as Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan stand to get the biggest boost as a US-led economic rebound pushes up demand for tech products.

On the other hand, economists expect even faster rises in imports to cut trade surpluses in some countries, including China and South Korea.

They are also debating whether the export rebound is driven by a substantive recovery in demand or just companies replenishing their empty warehouses.

"The indicators out of the US are indeed picking up quite strongly and we do feel that this will feed through into high exports for Asia," said Rajeev Sanyal, regional economist at Deutsche Bank in Singapore.

"Of course, if the US falls back into recession, Asia would be affected. But at this point, I think we've seen a pickup in final demand and business investment which is good news. Sharply rising oil prices could be a threat, but that is not our central view," he said.

Economists see Singapore's non-oil exports rebounding 6.4 percent this year, thanks to stronger US orders for electronics, after a hefty 14.4 percent fall last year.

"I think it will be a very strong recovery, seen coming through from the second quarter and beyond," said PK Basu, economist at Credit Suisse First Boston in Singapore.

"Not only are exports turning up, but inventories are also very, very lean and they need to be replenished. Output will probably considerably exceed export growth, especially in the first half," he said.

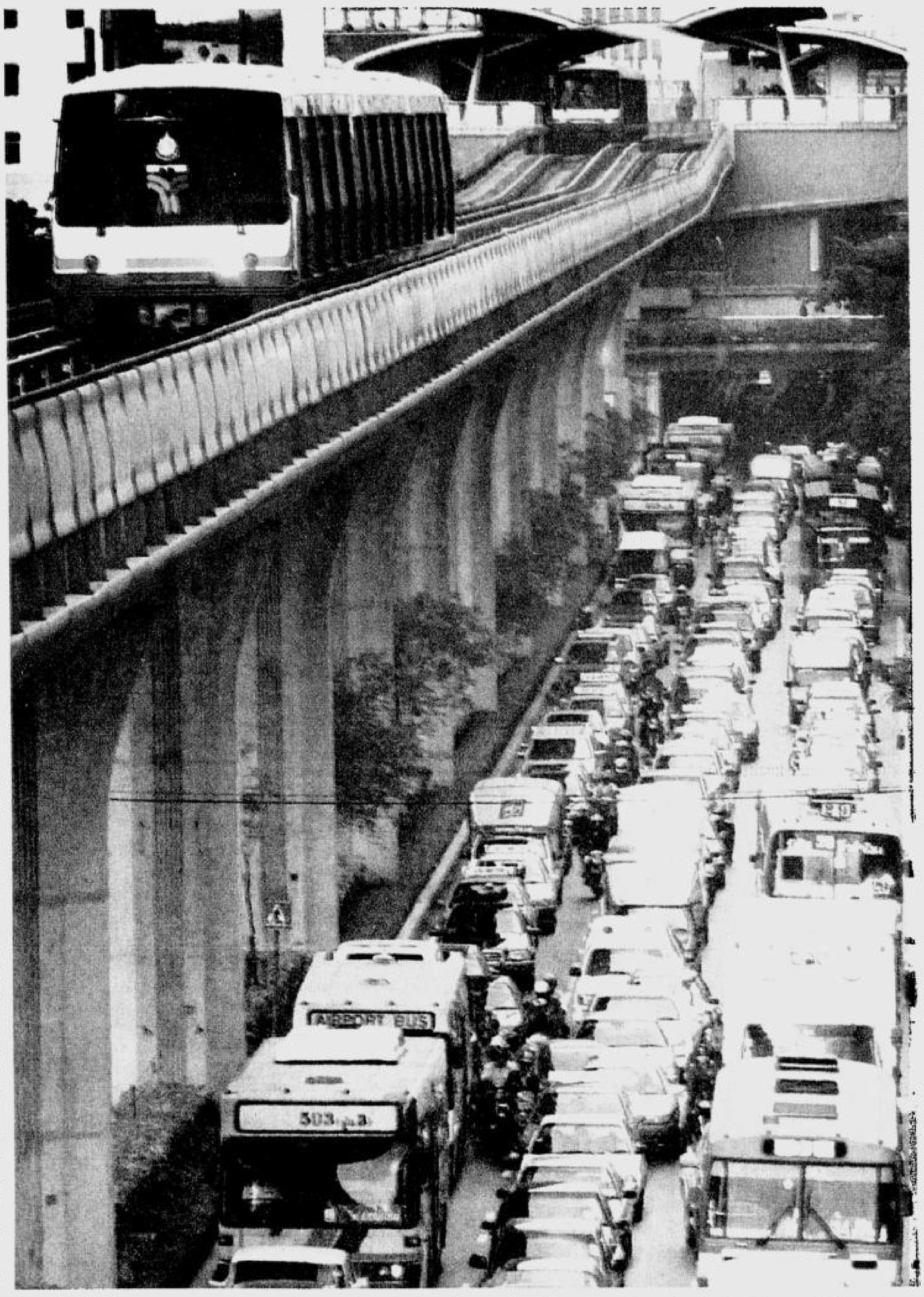
Analysts revised up by 16 percent their trade surplus forecast for Taiwan, whose exports account for around 45 percent of the island's gross domestic product, taking it to $13.6 billion from $11.7 billion in a December poll.

However, the island's 2002 trade surplus would still be 14 percent smaller than last year's surplus as improving economic prospects fuel demand for raw materials and capital equipment.

Major companies such as Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing and United Microelectronics—the world's Top 2 contract microchip makers—said last week they may speed up or boost capital expenditure plans this year.

South Korea is likely to follow the same pattern.

China, Asia's rising economic star, is expected to see its trade surplus slip to $20.06 billion this year from $22.60 billion last year as its entry to the World Trade Organization leads to lower import tariffs. *Reuters*



AN ELEVATED commuter train, top, leaves Phayathai station as a long line of cars jam the street during rush hours in Bangkok. The SkyTrain, as the system is called, travels along 14 miles of two lines running on pillar-supported tracks above some of Bangkok's most congested shopping and office areas at speeds of 21 mph. AP

Asia is source of most attacks on the Internet

WASHINGTON—South Korea produced the most cyberattacks of any country apart from the United States in the fourth quarter of 2001, according to a study released this week.

The report by the security consulting firm Predictive Systems found that, after the United States, Asian and Pacific Rim countries produced 91 percent of all attacks during the period.

South Korea topped the list with 34 percent of attacks, followed by China (29 percent) and Japan (10 percent), the report said.

But Richard Smith, author of the report, said the true source of the attacks may be elsewhere, because hackers can take control of computers by implanting viruses in those machines.

High speed, or broadband users, are seen as being more vulnerable to attacks because their computers are always connected to the Internet.

"South Korea has one of the largest broadband populations in the world, behind the United States," Smith told AFP. "I don't think the attacks all originated there, it may be a jumping post" for hackers. *AFP*

Motorola in talks to sell unit to Nortel

NEW YORK—Motorola Inc. is in talks with Nortel Networks Inc. to combine the two companies' wireless network equipment businesses, BusinessWeek said in its latest edition.

Motorola's $6.5-billion wireless networks division, which makes the antennae and other equipment used to operate wireless networks, lost $1.4 billion in 2001.

Citing talks between Motorola's president Ed Breen and top Nortel executives, BusinessWeek said the two companies are exploring a range of options, including the possibility of Nortel's $5.7 billion wireless unit buying Motorola's wireless division and the combined company being spun out as an independent business. *Reuters*

PCCW to lay off 1,400 next week

HONG KONG—Hong Kong's largest telephone company, Pacific Century CyberWorks Ltd., is planning to slash 1,400 jobs next week, a report said Friday.

PCCW's labor union said the company had gathered information on staff members' vacation plans and had canceled projects that some employees had been working on, the Hong Kong Economic Journal reported.

Last year, PCCW cut some 800 staff.

The prospect of further job cuts around the corner comes after PCCW chair Richard Li, youngest son of tycoon Li Ka-shing, said Wednesday that he could not guarantee that the company would not lay-off more staff in the future.

PCCW posted a HK$1.89-billion ($243 million) profit for 2001, a substantial improvement on its $6.9-billion loss a year earlier.

Andersen accountants in Hong Kong, China joining rival PwC

HONG KONG—Joining the flight from troubled accounting giant Arthur Andersen, partners in its Hong Kong and China affiliates said Thursday evening that they would join rival PwC in a merger.

The Asia-Pacific affiliates of Andersen unanimously supported a global combination with rival KPMG earlier this week, saying they would pursue it even if similar talks with KPMG in Europe fell through.

But the Andersen accountants in Hong Kong and China decided it would be better to go off on their own with PwC, which is slightly larger here, said Yvonne Chan, marketing manager of Andersen in Hong Kong.

Andersen has been struggling since its US arm was indicted last week on charges of obstruction of justice when employees allegedly shredded documents and deleted computer files at bankrupt energy trader Enron.

Andersen Worldwide affiliates have been frantically moving to salvage what they can of a business with a badly tarnished brand name and have been talking with other accountants about mergers.

No layoffs are planned, Chan said, as the Hong Kong and China firms create a 6,000-person operation in Hong Kong, a top regional finance center, and China, which is expected to grow and provide opportunities for Western businesses as it opens its economy as part of the World Trade Organization.

The Andersen name would vanish in Hong Kong and China, Chan said, adding that "some colleagues are pretty emotional" about seeing it go.

Andersen, which has about 900 employees in Hong Kong and 1,400 in mainland China, will be joined with PwC in a deal that simply combines their operations into one with no money changing hands, Chan said.

Chan and a PwC spokesperson both said they could not provide revenue figures for the merged business.

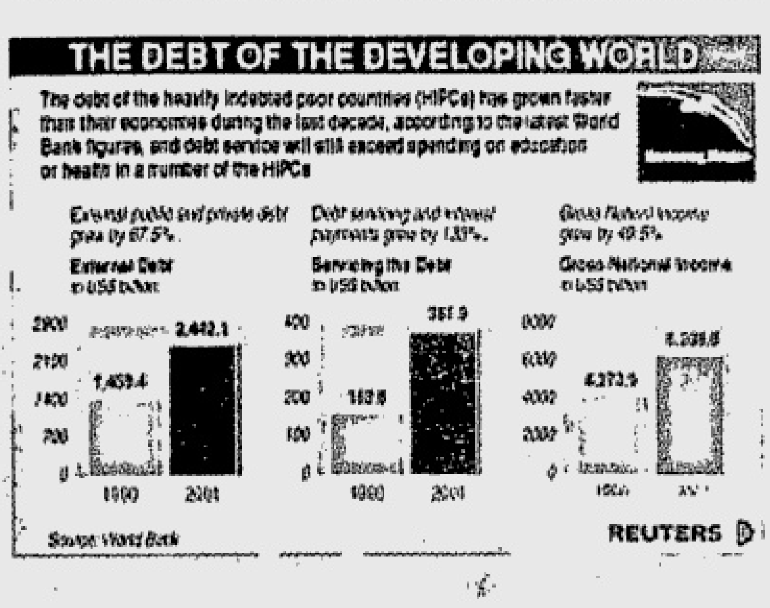
Andersen's managing partner for Greater China, Albert Ng, pledged the firms would "develop a truly leading position."

"Whilst we remain deeply upset by the events affecting Andersen in the USA which have led to this development, we have no doubt that joining PwC offers great opportunities and benefits for our firm, our people and—above all—our customers," Ng said in a statement.

The PwC chair in Hong Kong, Silas Yang, and his counterpart in China, Kent Watson, praised the "practice and professionalism of our new colleagues."

Andersen's US arm denies the criminal charge and says it was unfair to attack an entire firm over the actions of a few employees.

High-profile clients including Delta Air Lines and drugmaker Merck & Co. have fled, and accounting firms around the world with close ties to Andersen, including auditors in the Philippines and Japan, have been seeking other partners. *AP*



THE DEBT OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD

The debt of the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) has grown faster than their economies during the last decade, according to the latest World Bank figures, and debt service will still exceed spending on education or health in a number of the HIPCs

Source: World Bank

REUTERS

Telecom sector's unlikely darling: The phone book

PHILADELPHIA—The answer could be found in the yellow pages for cash-strapped telecommunications giants trying to find funds in a difficult market.

The telephone book has emerged as the hottest asset in the battered US telecoms sector, as companies look for ways to boost their balance sheets through financial restructuring.

Often overlooked as a dinosaur in an era of Palm Pilots, the telephone book—with its consistent cash flow and stable customer base—has become the low-tech focus of an industry previously bewitched by Web-hosting centers and ultrafast fiber-optic networks.

An American icon, the newsprint pages of phone books list telephone numbers and addresses of neighbors from Abbott to Zuy, and businesses from abrasives to zoos. More than 592 million directories weighing 651,700 tons clutter shelves and desks in nearly every home and business in the United States, according to consulting firm Joyce and Associates.

The old-standby is emerging as one good way to raise quick cash for businesses squeezed by overly ambitious technology investments that have yet to pay off, frothy competition and investor doubts in financial markets.

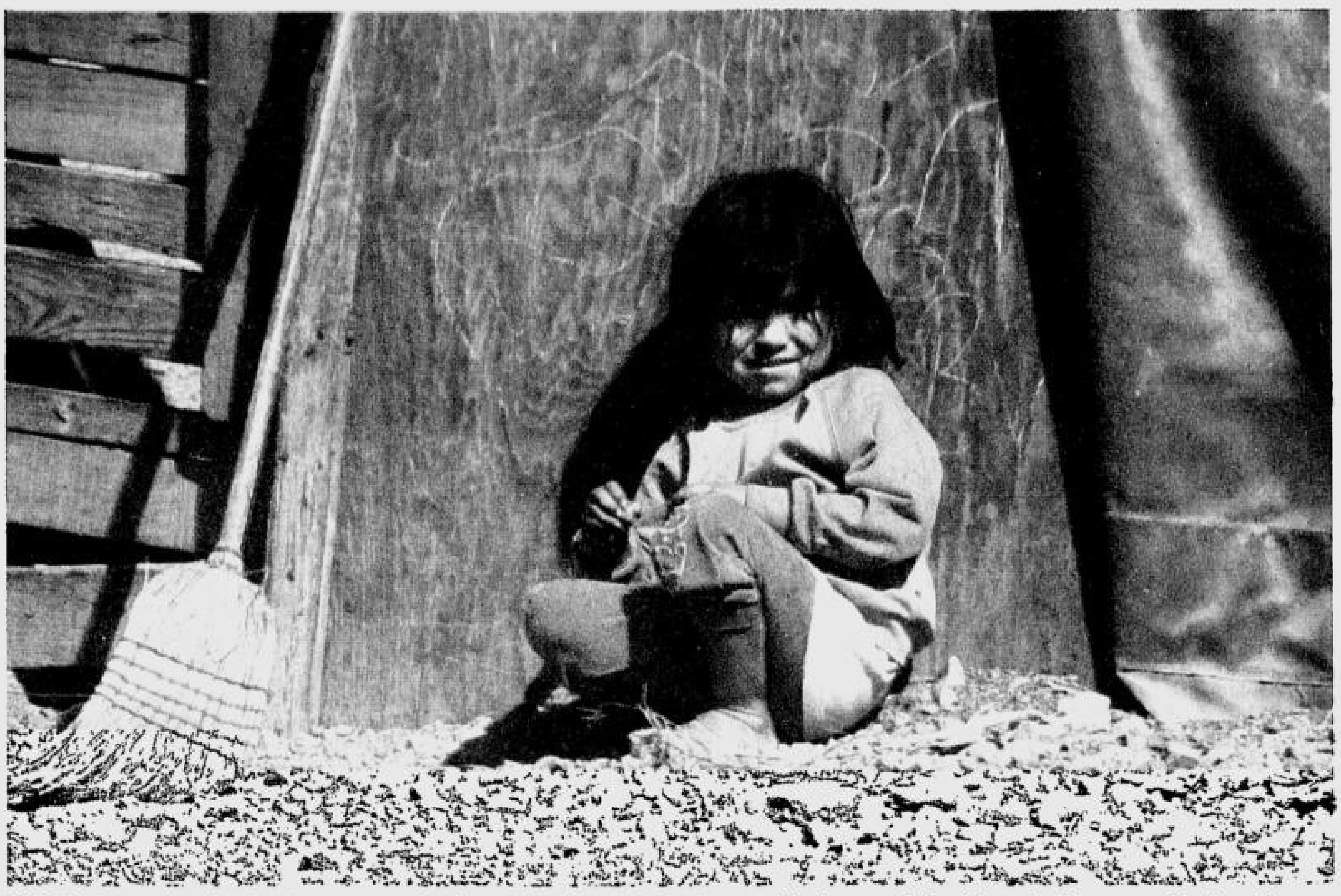
No. 3 US long distance carrier Sprint Corp. and Qwest Communications International Inc., a dominant local phone carrier in the US West, are trying to sell their directory publishing units as they scramble to raise funds. Local and long distance carrier McLeodUSA Inc. recently sold its telephone book unit after a bidding war.

"Clearly, the telecom companies are in very difficult financial situations. There are certain types of assets that are very self-contained that can be sold off as fairly easily and quickly," said Gartner Group analyst David Neil.

"It's a relatively easy sell and they will get reasonable price for them. And they need the cash," he said.

In years past, the telecom industry had been defined by very big deals such as the $53-billion combination of GTE and Bell Atlantic, which created Verizon Communications. *Reuters*

Japanese crisis gone today, back tomorrow?



LUPITA Perez, 4, takes in the sun near the door of her home in the impoverished town of Guadalupe in Monterrey, Mexico. More than 50 world leaders are meeting in Monterrey to discuss ways of combating poverty. AP

TOKYO—A last-minute surge in Tokyo stocks has rescued Japan from a financial crisis this fiscal year. A budding cyclical recovery and a little political will may be enough to prevent one in the next.

Talk of a "March crisis" predicated on the plight of Japan's banking system came and went as the benchmark Nikkei share average swiftly snapped back more than 20 percent from an 18-year low of 9,420.85 on Feb. 6.

The introduction of stricter rules on short-selling gave an artificial taste to the bounce, but upbeat signs in the US and domestic economies also pitched in their two cents.

"I have been skeptical of a crisis anyway," said Peter Morgan, senior economist at HSBC Securities. "Japan is on the road to a cyclical upturn and stock prices are unlikely to fall (again) to levels we have seen."

Last week, the government upgraded its economic assessment for the first time in nearly two years, saying the worst could be over for some sectors of the world's second largest economy as a bottoming out of exports and decline in inventories offer hope.

Although capital spending is expected to be weak and should temper any recovery from Japan's worst slump in the post-war era, corporate profits, for one, appear to be turning up.

"This (fiscal) year, almost all the news was bad with the economy. The difference in the next one will be expectations that things are bottoming out," said Hirokazu Yuihama, senior strategist at Daiwa Institute of Research (DIR).

Both DIR and Nomura Securities, Japan's top brokerage, expect major non-financial firms to log a 56-percent rise in group recurring profit in 2002/03 helped by a weak yen and lower restructuring costs. Profits fell 40 percent this year.

Still, no one is ready to make out a blank check to Japanese stocks, the yen or government bonds. Little has been done about banks' bad-loan problems, an issue that has undermined investor confidence in Japan for years.

"The potential for a financial crisis will stay with us for the next five to 10 years until banks can get back on their feet," said Akihide Kinugawa, fund manager at Daido Life Investment Trust Management.

Kinugawa figures it will take that long for top banks to bring their non-performing loans—officially estimated at 20.71 trillion yen for the top eight banks at the end of September—down to more manageable levels.

The government wants to wipe out bad loans in two to three years. Some analysts are skeptical since deflation is creating new bad debts even as banks write off past loans.

The Financial Services Agency, Japan's financial regulator, has estimated total bad loans at 36.8 trillion yen ($278.8 billion) as of September at 136 banks, up 3.2 trillion yen from the end of March. Some foreign economists, however, put the figure as high as 150 trillion yen. **Reuters**

IMF upbeat on world growth, rules out ECB easing

MUNICH—Despite one of the mildest slowdowns on record, risks to the US recovery should not be ignored and the euro zone must concentrate on structural reform rather than campaigning for another cut in interest rates, a senior IMF officer said on Thursday.

"Easing more in Europe? It is far from obvious that this would benefit the economy in the euro area. It may even lead to weakness in the euro or higher inflation," said Flemming Larsen, International Monetary Fund's main representative in Europe.

"We also need to keep in mind that recovery seems to be just around the corner and given the lags in monetary policy it would seem sensible to wait for the moment," he said during a seminar held by the Ifo economic institute in Munich.

Ifo president Hans-Werner Sinn, hosting the conference, said his institute was still recommending a monetary easing to give the slow euro zone recovery extra momentum.

"The time for a different monetary policy will come but it is not there yet," he said.

Larsen also said that the US Federal Reserve may have to "begin to take back the substantial stimulus they imparted during the downturn," if the country's growth exceeded expectations, without spelling out the IMF's latest projections.

However, in a leaked draft of its World Economic Outlook, due to be published on April 18, the IMF has upped its forecast for US growth to 1.4 percent this year versus just 0.7 percent estimated shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks on US cities, and a sturdy 3.8 percent in 2003.

"In the US, we have clearly had a remarkable success story in the terms of its ability to manage this cycle and avoid a recession, because we may not even have had one in the US," Larsen said.

He was referring to the debate on whether the United States filled the conventional definition of a recession as two consecutive quarters of negative growth, following better than expected fourth quarter data.

On the other hand, irrational exuberance in US stock markets, the strong dollar, high current account deficit and "stretched balance sheets" of US consumers and businesses were all potential hurdles.

"Very high price/earnings ratios in US stock markets is something that is a cause for concern ... (and) the US economy has become extremely dependent on foreign capital inflows," he said, although he noted that this judgement was not new and had not impeded US success in the recent past.

On the whole, prospects for world growth were much brighter and Larsen said that the IMF was looking forward to solid and stable growth.

"Trend growth over the next five to 10 years of 3.5 percent to 4 percent for the world economy seems quite plausible and reflects the consensus of forecasters around the world," he said.

"At the same time we should not forget that there are still some significant imbalances that will need to be worked on over time, we simply do not know when it (the adjustments) will occur or what the consequences will be," he added. **Reuters**

Thailand near-term prospects remain weak, says IMF

WASHINGTON—Thailand is likely to see only a modest revival of growth this year, with a lasting recovery dependent on accomplishing more reform in corporate banking, the International Monetary Fund said Thursday.

"Near-term prospects remain weak" for economic growth, IMF executive directors said in a statement on the IMF's latest review of Thailand's progress in paying back $3.2 billion in IMF loans made during the Asian financial crisis.

The directors warned that "without more vigorous and wide-ranging reforms in (the banking and corporate) sectors, Thailand would not be in a position to fully share in the expected global recovery."

GDP growth is estimated to have reached "only" 1.5 percent last year, while this year, fiscal and monetary stimulus, along with the improving global economy, "should help support a modest growth revival," the IMF said.

Earlier this week, the Thai government forecast 2- to 3-percent growth for this year.

On the fiscal side, the IMF directors supported Thailand's stimulative stance, but cautioned that high and rising public debt levels mean there is little scope for further expansion in spending. **AFP**

Economic index shows US surging out of recession

WASHINGTON—The US economy appeared to be pulling out of recession with surprising strength after the battering from the Sept. 11 attacks, economists said after the release of new data Thursday.

The Conference Board said Thursday that its closely watched index of leading economic indicators was flat in February after four consecutive monthly increases.

But Conference Board economist Ken Goldstein said although the index did not rise in February, the trend showed "the US economy has quickly turned from recession and is now firmly in recovery."

Even with no change in February, the leading index is still up 2.4 percent from six months ago and up 3.1 percent from a year ago, the board noted.

"Should this trend continue, the trough of the recession would most likely be November 2001, making the most recent economic contraction very short and certainly the mildest in US history," the business research group said in a statement.

Salomon Smith Barney economist Kermit Schoenholtz said the strength of the recovery surprised many, fearing a deep and prolonged downturn after Sept. 11.

"Pessimists anticipated a prolonged global recession, driven by a collapse in spending on the part of an over-indebted US private sector," he said.

"In the aftermath of Sept. 11; some argued that long-term growth also would suffer from the increased cost of doing business, the reduced private share of economic activity and heightened risk premia." **AFP**

Veil of secrecy set to be lifted in tax havens

LONDON—Judgment day is approaching for the world's offshore tax havens and, whether they like it or not, they will have to lift the veil of secrecy over their operations.

It has become clear in the past week that an attempted clampdown on offshore financial centers by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is likely to be a runaway success.

The US administration's aim to combat terrorism funding after the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington has lent added momentum to the OECD's plans.

As the rich nations' club puts the finishing touches to a blacklist of countries that face sanctions for not agreeing to clean up their act, it looks, contrary to all expectations, as if almost no country will be on it.

"Nóbody of any consequence in the offshore world wants to be on that list. Many of the institutions based here made clear it would be damaging for their business," Laurie Morgan, president of the Advisory and Finance Committee of Guernsey, told Reuters.

Guernsey and its neighbor, Jersey, announced last month, just ahead of the OECD's Feb. 28 deadline, that they had agreed to improve the transparency of their financial industries.

"We were ready to commit in November, but there were a lot of details to be finalized and so it did not finally happen until Feb. 27," said Morgan.

"Transparency is now inevitable in matters involving the movement of large funds of money, especially as tax evasion is now considered a crime anywhere in the world," he added.

The OECD's campaign against tax havens, where many of the world's drug traffickers and criminals stash billions of dollars, has been running for several years but has been bogged down by wrangling over what constituted a tax haven and then an ambivalent attitude from the United States administration under President George W. Bush.

The US attitude changed last year after the OECD softened some of its demands but then Sept. 11 happened and the US authorities refocused on the need to root out dirty money in its pursuit of terrorist funds washing around the world.

Last month's deadline for the 35 tax havens originally named and shamed by the OECD in June 2000 passed with only half of the countries agreeing to work toward better exchange of information with international tax authorities.

But since then, there have been almost daily announcements from another dozen countries such as Belize, Gibraltar, the Bahamas and the US Virgin Islands, pledging to cooperate.

"Many were waiting to see what we and Jersey would do as we are key players in the whole thing," said Morgan.

A source close to the OECD admitted things were going a lot better than he could have hoped. "In fact, I think there will only be a hard core of about half a dozen who do not commit and who were never likely to commit anyway." **Reuters**

Former exec says Microsoft used monopoly

WASHINGTON—A former Gateway executive testified Thursday that Microsoft used its monopoly of the personal computer operating system market to force PC makers to load its software rather than that of its rivals.

"Microsoft has used its control of the operating system market to thwart competition and eliminate consumer choice," Peter Ashkin told the hearing presided by US District Court Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly.

Ashkin said Microsoft used its status as the dominant maker of personal computer operating systems to force its will on computer makers, known in the industry as original equipment manufacturers for software used on the PC, known as "middleware."

Ashkin said the proposal from the nine states and the District of Columbia to counterbalance Microsoft's antitrust violations is superior to the proposed settlement by the Department of Justice and Microsoft.

"Having considered both Microsoft's proposed remedy and the states' proposed remedy, it is my view that the states' proposed remedy is far superior to Microsoft's," Ashkin said in court testimony.

Microsoft lawyer Rick Pepperman sought to discredit Ashkin's allegations as those of a competitor seeking to benefit from stricter remedies.

Following company founder Ted Waite's return to the post of chief executive, Ashkin was terminated from his position at Gateway in 2001. Soon thereafter, Ashkin took his current post with AOL Time Warner, a proponent of stricter sanctions against Microsoft.

But Ashkin refused to acknowledge that AOL Time Warner is a competitor of Microsoft, arguing that AOL is a content provider while Microsoft is a software firm.

"No, it's not fair to say that," Ashkin replied when Pepperman asked if his current employer could be considered a competitor to his client, adding "AOL is a content company (which is) very different" from Microsoft's software focus. **AFP**

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Plumbing association's 2002 plans in the pipeline

THE NATIONAL Master Plumbers' Association of the Philippines Inc (Nampap), the country's only accredited organization of plumbing practitioners, designers, and professionals, have officially announced its three major activities for the year.

Kicking off with the Joint Visayas and Mindanao Regional Conference to be held in Cebu Plaza Hotel, Cebu City on March 22 and 23, Nampap president Alberto Cabael commended its Cebu Chapter and conference chair designate engineer Vitaliano A. Tacudin, who hosts the event. According to engineer Fortunato H. Amosco, chair of the Professional Regulation Commission-Board of Master Plumbing, the conference will likewise hold the oath taking of newly passed master plumbers of the recently concluded board examination.

By July, Nampap will be holding its second activity, the Luzon Mid-Year Conference. To be hosted by the Cavite City Chapter and headed by Manila Chapter president engineer Senando DT. Trajico, the event will be held at the Development Academy of the Philippines.

Capping Nampap's activities for the year is the awaited Anniversary and National Convention on Nov. 8 and 9 at the Manila Midtown Hotel. The convention will be chaired by engineer Virgilio D. Simbulan, and his deputy is engineer Jason Magos.

With the overall theme "Professional Master Plumbers—Pipeline to Economic Development," Nampap's major activities this year are expected to draw in thousands of delegates nationwide. In all gatherings, participants will be treated to extensive product and technical presentations, as well as exhibits of modern and state-of-the-art plumbing materials, tools and equipment.

Nampap is also actively pursuing the approval of the proposed Plumbing Engineering Law authored by Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, Jr. and Rep. Joseph Francis Escudero, as well as the final drafting of the Plumbing Engineering Curriculum.

For details and inquiries, call Nampap national secretariat Romy Collado at 713-7844/712-3049, or e-mail nampap@edsamail.com.ph.

NORTHWEST INAUGURATES GAZEBO

Northwest Airlines Club Red, an association of over 700 travel arrangers and executive secretaries of top corporate accounts, recently held the dedication and blessing of the newly constructed gazebo at the St. Camillus Home for Charity. Doing the honors for the ribbon cutting were NWA marketing communications manager Candy Ochoa (third from right), Fr. Nards Nono, OSC (sixth from left), and Bro. Angelino Aldegueri, OSC (center) of the St. Camillus Home of Charity. Looking on are the NWA Club Red members and NW-ITI corporate sales team. Apart from its corporate-related activities, Northwest Airlines Club Red also organizes socio-civic activities such as medical and dental missions and other outreach programs.

LITTLE ARCHERS' FUN STYLE OF TEACHING

The Little Archers Learning Center believes in a more wholistic and fun approach to learning for each and every one of its students. It provides an environment that helps your child develop his social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. Aside from the traditional method of learning, the school uses play as one of its major ways that a young child learns. The teachers at the center are not only highly qualified to educate children—they have heart. The school also recognizes the importance of a parent's involvement with a child's early education. That is why Little Archers has designed a program that allows parents on the go to become more involved with their child's early education. Little Archers Learning Center is located at 163 Windsor Tower, Legazpi Street, Legazpi Village, Makati City. For inquiries, call Carol or Armi at 812-7051, or e-mail LilleArchers@hotmail.com.

Security along the expressway

SEQUTECH Corp. builds up its tri-media campaign on security systems by unveiling a giant billboard of PowerMax along South Luzon Expressway.

For southbound motorists, the billboard can be viewed on the right side on the expressway's Merville, Parañaque portion.

PowerMax, imported from Tel Aviv-based Visonic Ltd., Israel's leading manufacturer of reliable and high-tech security systems, is the hottest product in the Philippine home security industry today.

Patrick Antonio, president of Sequtech Corp., the exclusive distributor of Visonic Ltd. Products in the Philippines, attributes PowerMax's popularity to the growing awareness of Filipinos on the need for security systems to guard their homes and offices.

"Many Filipinos today are aware of the need for modern, electronic home security systems because they can no longer rely on traditional sources of security such as dogs and security guards alone. But they don't just buy any security system. They look for a product that is reliable."

Powermax is made from Israel, the country noted worldwide for its extremely high level of security.

PowerMax combines security, home automation and communication in a wireless setup. Features include the ability to call the user or village guards security in case of intrusion or emergency, and a system that switches on the lights at night when nobody's home.

Sequtech Corp. is inaugurating shortly its first provincial branch in Davao City to cater to the security needs of the public in Mindanao. A second billboard for PowerMax is also set to be installed in a major highway in Metro Manila.

For inquiries on PowerMax, call Sequtech Corp. at 845-3444.

BMAP INDUCTS OFFICERS

The Bank Marketing Association of the Philippines held its general membership meeting and induction of new officers and directors at the Dusit Hotel Nikko recently. Guest speaker for the affair was Dr. Johnny Noe Ravalo, chief economist of the Bankers Association of the Philippines. Taking their oath of office before BAP president Dr. Placido Mapa Jr. are (from left), Gerry D. Diaz, president; Allan M. Tumbaga, vice president; Maureen Abelardo, director; Bobby F. Banaag, secretary; Mayie Callangan, auditor; Ferdie La Chica, treasurer; Cathy Alonso, Roni Tapia-Merk, Jose Mari Banzon, Jaz L. Bunag, and Yolly Albano, directors. Ricky Y. Lepatan Jr. is also a director.

CDO-FOODSPHERE DISTRIBUTORS' CONFAB

CDO-Foodsphere Inc. recently held its first distributors conference for grocery products at the Fontana Leisure Parks in Pampanga. Shown above are Foodsphere's trade partners, key executives and sales people after mapping out strategic plans to reinforce the position of the CDO brand as a key player in the canned meats market.

Product FILES

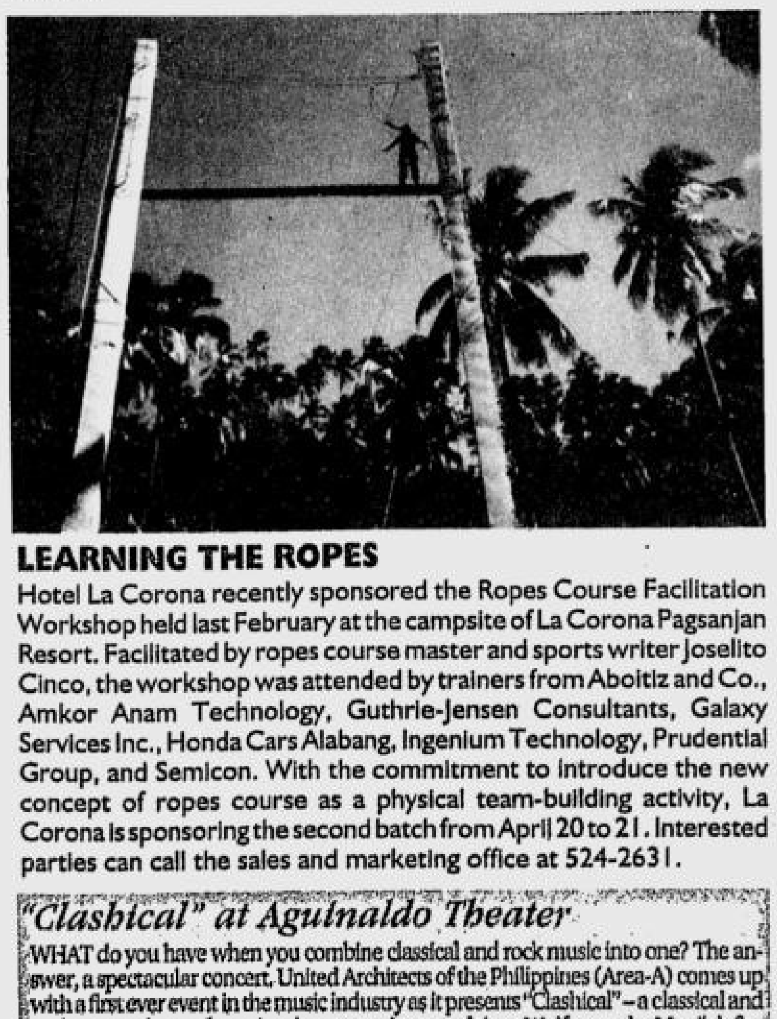
IS YOUR frying pan used and abused? Starting today, Tefal together with 3M will educate you on how to take care of your treasured pots and pans. Tefal Non-stick Cookware are meant to last a lifetime, so better start taking care of them.

Taking care of your Tefal Non-stick pan is very easy. The top of your list in caring for your Tefal Non-stick pan is to use only a Non-abrasive cleaning pad. And the only recommended cleaning pad is Scotch Brite Scratch-Free Scrub Sponge from 3M. This scrub sponge is the perfect partner because it is gentle to the non-stick interior of your Tefal pan.

Tefal Cookware is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp. Call 890-9703.

GMA TIES UP WITH LUX

Want to have dinner with your favorite celebrity? Want to shop 'til you drop? Want to know how it feels to be a star? You need not look far. Lux Super Rich, in cooperation with GMA, make all your dreams come true with their Star Storm Raffle—destined to give you the ultimate star experience of a lifetime. Shown, seated from left, are Marivy Pineda, Lux brand manager, Gilbert Simpao, Unilever Personal Care Marketing Manager, Serafin Bautista, SVP, GMA sales, and Elaine Ogtong, VP-media, Masscom. Standing, from left, Vanessa Vasquez, GMA account manager, Leah Nuyda, GMA sales director, Nitto Victoria, events supervisor of Unilever Philippines, Seanta Pasic, Unilever promotions group, and Colette Reyes, assistant brand manager, all witness the contract signing of the Lux Super Rich Star Storm raffle.



LEARNING THE ROPES

Hotel La Corona recently sponsored the Ropes Course Facilitation Workshop held last February at the campsite of La Corona Pagsanjan Resort. Facilitated by ropes course master and sports writer Joselito Cinco, the workshop was attended by trainers from Aboitiz and Co., Amkor Anam Technology, Guthrie-Jensen Consultants, Galaxy Services Inc., Honda Cars Alabang, Ingenium Technology, Prudential Group, and Semicon. With the commitment to introduce the new concept of ropes course as a physical team-building activity, La Corona is sponsoring the second batch from April 20 to 21. Interested parties can call the sales and marketing office at 524-2631.

"Clashical" at Aguinaldo Theater

WHAT do you have when you combine classical and rock music into one? The answer, a spectacular concert. United Architects of the Philippines (Area-A) comes up with a first ever event in the music industry as it presents "Clashical"—a classical and rock concert in one featuring the country's top rock icon Wolfgang, the Manila's finest Manila Philharmonic Orchestra and fast rising pop/ R&B diva Anna Fegi. The said concert will be held on March 23, 7p.m, at the Aguinaldo Theather, Camp Aguinaldo, EDSA, QC.

"Clashical" is also made possible in part by PCSO, MTV Philippines, Forward Magazine, Daily Tribune, Destiny Cable, and Today, Special thanks to Kameraworld, Smint, Teresa Marble Corporation and Rebel Internet Card. For ticket inquiries, please call the UAP Secretariat at 551-4350 or JMT Production at 896-7362.

IQ ON IT

The FEU-East Asia College of Information Technology marked its 10th year recently with a week-long celebration. The occasion was dubbed 'East Asia @ 10: Tech-novation X-cellence in IT Education,' as the school takes pride in being one of only five IT institutions in NCR—from among more than 100 IT schools—to be given the esteemed recognition as Center of Development for Excellence (Code) in IT education by the Commission on Higher Education. One important event was the 'IQ on IT', an inter-school competition among high school students. Shown are the finalists from St. Stephen School, Immaculate Conception Academy of Manila, Ramon Magsaysay High School, St. Mary's Academy of Sta. Ana, and Holy Family of Quezon City. Declared winners were St. Stephen School at first place, Immaculate Conception at second, and Holy Family at third.

Scholar's paper on integrative med

THE PHILIPPINE College of Integrative Medicine (PCIM), a synergy of modern and alternative medical practitioners, will hold a lecture/seminar on "The Scientific Basis of Integrative Medicine" on March 23 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, from 6 to 9 p.m. The seminar is open to PCIM and non-members. Invited as guest speaker is alternative medicine expert Hector C. de los Santos, M.D., a licensed homeopathic physician of Bio Integrative Health Center International based in Reno, Nevada. Interested parties can call Margie Daoas at 833-9142/834-1054, or Jay Bernaldes in Cebu at (032)253-3707/46.

MFI scholarship deadline nears

THE MERALCO Foundation Institute needs 150 high school graduates for the first year of the three-year Industrial Technician Program and another 30 applicants for the Information Technology, where the school is accepting partial scholarship. The deadline for the submission of applications is on March 26. Application forms may be obtained from the registrar's office of MFI any day during office hours. Applicants must be Filipino citizens between 16 and 22 years of age, and must come from a family whose family income does not exceed P120,000. For more information, visit the registrar at the MFI Building on Ortigas Avenue in Pasig, or call 632-0756 to 67, locals 431 to 433.

Transition skills for new managers

NEWLY promoted sales managers can learn transition and management skills that will allow them to handle additional responsibilities and challenges during the "From Selling to Managing" seminar to be conducted by Mansmith and Fielders Inc. on March 22 and 23 at the Manila Galleria Suites. Key subjects to be covered are how to make the difficult transition from salesperson to manager, choosing management styles, managing people, activities, and yourself. For inquiries, call 723-6671, 416-4662, or e-mail info@mansmith.net.

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A Message of Thanks

We, the family and relatives of our dearly beloved

ROBERTO ROXAS MANAHAN

who was called home by our Heavenly Father
on 25 February 2002

convey sincerely our deep and heartfelt gratitude to all those who, with great love and generosity, offered Holy Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and condolences, visited and kept vigil with us, attended the funeral rites, and who in countless and immeasurable ways condoled with and comforted us, gave spiritual and emotional support, in our time of bereavement.

HONORIO MIRANDA VELASQUEZ

Peacefully joined his Creator on March 20, 2002 at the age of 83.

His bereaved wife **Feliza Jimenez Velasquez**; his children **Edgar** and **Zanette**, **Lita** and **Benny**, **Albine** and **Lito**, **Marilou**, **Jimmy** and **Cora**, **Joel** and **Mylene**, and **Cynthia**; his granchildren and great granchildren; his sisters **Mrs. Nieves V. Hernandez** and **Mrs. Tomasa V. Picache**; his brother **Albert**; nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Faith Chapel of Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 27, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina immediately after the 8:00 a.m. mass at Arlington Memorial Chapel.

The family of the late

ALEJANDRO "Alex" SAGUN GARRIDO

who joined our Creator on
12 March 2002 at the age of 53.

Wishes to thank relatives and friends
for all the prayers and support.

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dignified service to keep the memory
of your departed loved ones.

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ATTY. ISABEL "BEBENG" BRINGAS

Born in Bangued, Abra on July 8, 1915

Joined the company of her Creator on March 21, 2002 at the age of 86.

Her only daughter **Emily**, request the pious readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 27, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

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Bakit lalayo ka pa? Sa INQUIRER, *convenient na sulit pa!*

[illegible]

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord" 2 Corinthians 5:8

So Lovingly Remembered
First Death Anniversary

FEDERICO O. MACALALAD

Formerly an Accountant of the Budget Commission, Manila

He died in the Peace of our Lord in Virginia, USA
March 24, 2001.

We, his family, relatives and friends request those who knew him in life and the pious readers to pray for his unending happiness with our Lord.

Holy Masses will be offered in the following churches:

1.	San Agustin Church, Intramuros, Manila	10:00 AM
2.	Manila Metropolitan Cathedral, Intramuros, Manila	10:00 AM
3.	San Miguel Church, San Miguel, Manila	7:00 AM
4.	St. Vincent de Paul, Ermita, Manila	5:00 PM
5.	St. Jude, Archdiocesan Shrine, San Miguel, Manila	7:00 AM
6.	Divine Word Mission Seminary (Christ the King), E. Rodriguez	11:30 AM
7.	Mt. Carmel Shrine, Broadway Street, Quezon City	6:00 PM
8.	Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Project 4, Quezon City	3:30 PM
9.	St. Joseph Shrine, Project 3, Quezon City	5:00 PM
10.	Quiapo Church, Manila	6:00 AM

"Grieve not for I am in a far, far better place
together again with Papang for eternity..."

Our Beloved "Mamang"

Felicidad Arnedo-Arceo Santos-Cuyugan

Peacefully joined our Creator on March 18, 2002
at the age of 95.

Her children **Vesta** and **Antonio** (†) **Fausto**, **Noel** and **Juliet**, **Linda** and **Fernando Rivera**, **Nimfa** and **Eddie** (†) **Pineda**, **Verne** and **Hector Reyes**, **Lei** and **Romeo Canlas**; her grandchildren **Riget** and **Kathy Fausto**, **Rouel** and **Lalaine Fausto**, **Fay** and **Dennis Pineda**, **Javin Fausto**, **Regie** and **Heather Pineda**, **Giselle Pineda**, **Shinee**, **Koolee** and **Kaki Reyes**, **Emerald Santos-Cuyugan**, **Cheska** and **Ida Canlas**; her great grandchildren **Keio** and **Mikka Fausto**, **Keesha** and **Misha Fausto**, **Dani** and **Pepi Pineda** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Good Shepherd Memorial Park, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Interment will be on Tuesday, March 26, 2002, 10:00 a.m., at the Family Estate, Good Shepherd Memorial Park, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any Identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

Members of the Board, Management and Staff of

Baliwag Water District

announce with deep sorrow the passing away
of one of our Directors

EX VICE-MAYOR AMOR T. ROBIELOS

who died on 21 March 2002 at the age of 75.

His remains now lie in state at the family residence,
Sabang, Baliwag, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Sunday,
24 March 2002 at the Baliwag Catholic
Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

Melania Macarangal Pedron

Peacefully joined our Lord
on March 21, 2002 at the age of 85.

Her loving children ***Elenita (Rodolfo)***, ***Nestor (Nena)***, ***Jessie***, ***Teresita (Hector)***, ***Oscar (Melinda)***, ***Nancy (Danilo)***, ***Amor(Mariet)***; *together with her grandchildren* ***Joy (Mario)***, ***Glenn***, ***Gay (Dan)***, ***Winston***, ***Melanie (Byron)***, ***Nina***, ***Janice***, ***Gladys***, ***Robert***, ***G.A.***, ***Maricris***; *and great grandchildren* ***Jenna***, ***Kyle***, ***Camille***, ***Vania & Lexine***, *request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.*

Her remains lie in state at the Marian Memorial Chapels, Marcos Highway, Antipolo.

Interment will be in Luisiana, Laguna
(for the interment date call
Nestor at 0917-4218856
or Amor at 942-3934)

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang** ◎ *Assistant Editor* **Stella O. Gonzales**

TB and poverty: a vicious cycle

STRONG action is needed to fight tuberculosis.

In the World Health Organization's Western Pacific region, to which the Philippines belongs, 1,000 people die each day from TB. Most of them are poor who are in their most productive years. Thousands more fall sick from the disease.

"It is unacceptable that a curable disease such as TB continues to strike down millions every year when treatment costs as little as $10 per patient," says Dr. Shigeru Omi, regional director of WHO's Western Pacific office.

TB is on the rise worldwide and Omi says developing countries face a full-blown TB crisis. In fact, 99 percent of TB deaths occur in the developing world, perpetuating a cycle of poverty that is nearly impossible to escape.

There is a close link between TB and poverty. The countries in the region with the highest levels of TB—Cambodia, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Vietnam—all have high levels of poverty.

The poor are more likely to suffer from TB, which strikes in situations of overcrowding, inadequate ventilation and malnutrition. The poor also tend to receive inadequate health care.

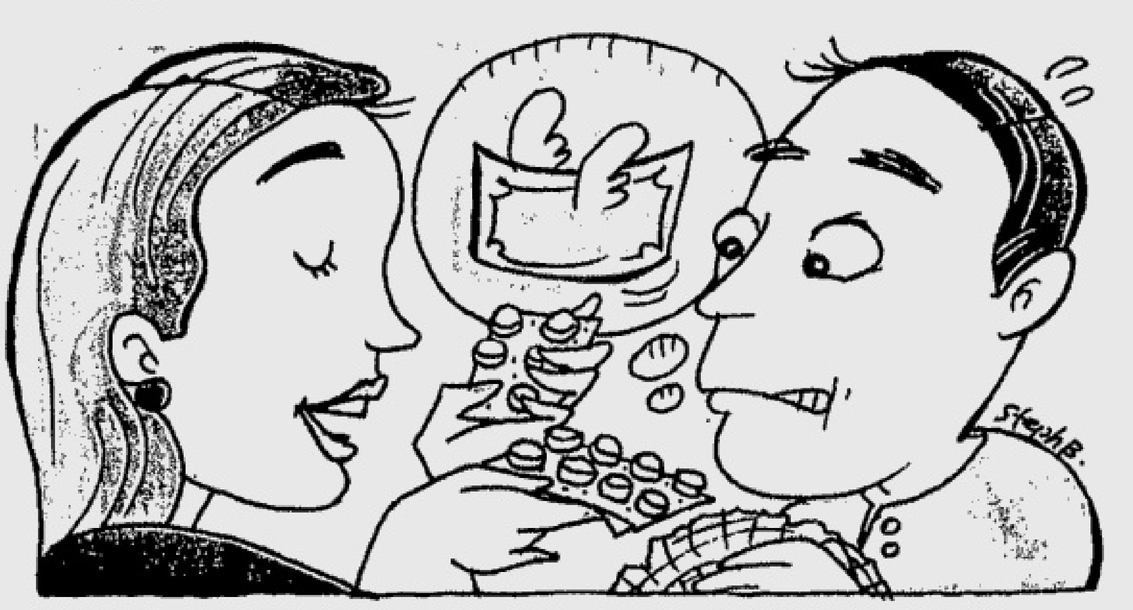

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Omi says governments can contribute to poverty alleviation by controlling diseases like TB.

"Studies show us that disease is a major factor in poverty. By lifting the disease burden, you give the poor at least a fighting chance to get themselves out of poverty," he says.

Economic cost

TB is economically hard on families because 70 percent of TB victims are 15 to 54 years old, the most productive working years.

Approximately 20-30 percent of a household's annual income may be lost if the breadwinner becomes sick with TB. If the TB sufferer dies, an average of 15 years of income will be lost.

Globally, the annual economic cost of TB to the poor runs to billions of dollars.

"The benefits of diagnosing and treating TB far outweigh the economic costs of what happens when this devastating disease is left untreated," Omi says.

He warns that while the TB situation in poor countries is alarming, industrialized countries are also faced with a TB epidemic of their own.

With increasing global trade and travel, TB bacteria easily cross borders. In 2000, nearly 100,000 TB cases in Europe and North America were attributed to cross-border travels.

TB infection

The disease can be contracted through prolonged exposure to the TB bacteria. The bacteria spreads when infected people cough, sneeze or speak.

TB germs enter the body especially if the body's defenses are weak. Experts say it can attack any part of the body, but it usually affects the lungs.

TB in the lungs can cause coughing that lasts for more than two weeks, chest pain and coughing up phlegm with blood. Other signs are fatigue, weight loss, chills, fever, sweating at night and loss of appetite.

Dr. Raoul Villarete, head of the Lung Center of the Philippines public health and domiciliary unit, says the most common entryway of the TB bacteria is the airways. From the airways, bacteria can be carried anywhere into the body and infect any part.

Aside from family members of TB sufferers, also at risk are health workers in close contact with the patients and laboratory workers examining or processing sputum specimen, says Villarete.

More funding needed

But one of the main problems in TB prevention and control is funding.

Countries in the Western Pacific region need another $265 million—nearly half of their TB control budget—to fight TB effectively in the next five years. The money will go to the implementation of a TB control program called directly observed treatment, short-course (DOTS) and the offering of free diagnosis and treatment to 100 percent of the population.

The DOTS strategy is known to have more than a 90 percent cure rate in the Western Pacific region. However, of the estimated two million new cases in the region each year, only about one-third use the DOTS strategy.

Despite the funding shortfall, Omi says the Stop TB cause has been gathering steam.

Since the establishment of the TB Special Project in 1999, a strong foundation for TB control has been put in place in the Western Pacific region. In 2001, the global fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria was set up. The fund is currently worth $1.9 billion.

And international and social support has been growing to fight diseases that cause poverty.

If governments and international donors can come up with the funding shortfall in the Western Pacific, TB deaths will be cut by 50 percent in the next decade.

Reports from Tessa R. Salazar and the WHO Western Pacific Region Office

Dayrit, Japanese envoy open TB lab in Alabang

By Tessa R. Salazar

QUICK detection, correct diagnosis, alternative laboratory diagnostic tools and a venue for technical training are now made possible at the National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory (NTRL).

The NTRL, which is financed through 415 million yen (P158 million) in official development assistance, is located beside the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) in Alabang, Muntinlupa. It is the second facility funded by Japan to help prevent TB in the Philippines.

Inaugurated on Wednesday by Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit and Japanese Ambassador Yoshihisa Ara, the NTRL will provide early diagnosis and treatment of TB, train microscopists in sputum examination and train middle-level supervisors on laboratory management.

RITM director Dr. Remigio M. Olveda said that through the new lab, the RITM would be able to contribute to the control of TB, particularly in the detection and monitoring of multidrug resistant TB strains.

The facility will also pave the way for the development of alternative laboratory diagnostic tools that are more sensitive and practical for field use.

The NTRL has a lecture room, a training lab, a culture and susceptibility test room and a data analysis room.

Aside from the Philippines, Japan has assisted Nepal, Cambodia and Yemen in TB control, said Osamu Nakagaki, resident representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

International quality

Dayrit said the lab could provide quality sputum smears and diagnostic services at par with international standards. He said TB diagnosis in the country needed a lot of improvement.

The NTRL can provide highly sensitive and accurate tests for TB.

TB continues to be a public health problem in the Philippines. Since the 1960s up to the mid-'80s, it was always among the top three causes of mortality. In 1993, it ranked fifth, with a mortality rate of 36.7 per 100,000 population. As of 1992, 65 percent of TB deaths occurred in the productive age groups, which is 15-64 years old.

Prevalence

According to a WHO report, the Philippines, with 348.5 cases per 100,000 population, ranks fourth among all countries and second in the Western Pacific region in terms of notified TB cases.

The 1997 national prevalence survey showed that 62 percent of Filipinos are infected with TB, and 3.1 percent per 1,000 population had tested positive through direct smear examination.

Dayrit said TB control could be considered a test for a country's anti-poverty program.

"It is because of this that President Macapagal agreed, during discussions with Japan, that the Philippines become an Asean center for TB control," he said.

Prominent TB victims

ALTHOUGH TB is mainly a disease of the poor, history shows that TB knows no financial, cultural or international boundaries. Through the centuries, many well-known people either suffered life-long debilitation or died from the disease. This is the World Health Organization's (WHO's) list of some of the prominent TB victims in history.

*THOSE WHO DIED FROM TB

Name	Occupation	Birth-Death
King Tutankhamen*	Egyptian pharaoh	1358-1340 B.C.
Francois Voltaire	French writer/ philosopher	1694-1778
Simon Bolivar*	Venezuelan revolutionary leader	1783-1830
Col. William Light*	Founder of Adelaide, Australia	1786-1839
Edgar Allan Poe*	American writer/poet	1809-1849
Frederic Chopin*	Polish composer/pianist	1810-1849
Fyodor Dostoyevsky	Russian novelist	1821-1881
Okita Sôji*	Legenday Japanese samurai	1842-1868
Paul Gauguin	French painter	1848-1903
Marcelo H. Del Pilar*	Filipino writer and nationalist	1850-1896
Masaoka Shiki*	Japanese haiku poet	1867-1902
Manuel L. Quezon*	First President of the Philippines	1878-1944
Lu Xun*	Modern Chinese writer	1881-1936
Franz Kafka	Czech novelist	1883-1924
Eleanor Roosevelt*	American humanitarian/ First lady	1884-1962
Ho Chi Minh	First President of Vietnam	1890-1969
Lottie Lyell*	Australian film star	1890-1925
Miyazawa Kenji*	Japanese writer	1896-1933
Yi Sang*	Korean poet	1910-1937
Vivien Leigh*	British actress	1913-1967
Nelson Mandela	African nationalist	1918-

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS

A common silent killer in the legs

By Charles E. Buban

WHAT harm could a little blood clot in the legs do? A lot, especially if the clot gets lodged in your lungs after it travels through your veins.

The clot in your legs may end up in an artery in the lungs and block the normal blood flow to the heart, resulting in a fatal condition commonly referred to as pulmonary embolism.

Most clots originate in the legs and the condition can go undetected until it's too late. In fact, many doctors often overlook these clots in the legs, known as deep vein thrombosis (DVT).

While it is true that doctors encounter relatively few patients with this disease, DVT remains an important health concern.

Each year, 600,000 patients have early stage DVT, called venous thromboembolism (clot formation in the veins), and at least 50,000 of them, perhaps even as many as 200,000, will die from blood clots that obstruct blood flow to their lungs, according to the Canadian Lung Association.

The death rate for undiagnosed pulmonary embolism is 30 percent, but this drops to 3 percent with diagnosis and treatment.

Quite common

"DVT is one of the most common cardiovascular disease next to ischemic heart disease and stroke and it is the cause of significant morbidity and mortality here in the country," said Dr. Teresita de Guia, a pulmonologist and consultant at the Philippine Heart Center.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

"The tragedy is that problems arising from DVT or its earlier stage, VTE, could be avoided by simple, cost-effective measures."

During a recent scientific meeting of medical specialists at the Palm Grove, Rockwell Club, De Guia stressed the importance of early detection and the use of inexpensive means to fight the disease.

"Preventing this disease is cheaper than treating its consequences. The keys to preventing DVT are determining who is at risk, when to apply preventive measures and applying the appropriate measures," said De Guia.

Risk factors

Several factors increase an individual's risk of developing DVT. These are immobility that lasts more than three days, increased thickness of the blood, injury or trauma (like bone fractures in the legs), major surgery (especially in the pelvis or abdomen) in the past four weeks, obesity and pregnancy (particularly right before and after delivery).

Diseases and other conditions, like congestive heart failure, heart attack and stroke, also increase one's risk for DVT. In some cases, certain drugs may trigger the disease like if a person is taking hormone replacement therapy or illegal drugs intravenously.

Tell-tale signs

DVT is most common in the legs, but it can occur in other parts of the body as well.

Its signs and symptoms are pain (usually in the calf or thigh); presence of a "rope" or "cord" that can be felt in the vein along the course of the blood clot; swelling, usually in one leg; and warm, reddish skin (usually in the calf or thigh) that is tender to the touch.

Blood thinning drugs

Treatment for both VTE and DVT is directed at limiting the growth of the blood clot in the deep venous system. This is done by giving anticoagulant medicines (sometimes called blood thinners) which impair the body's normal blood clotting processes.

An anticoagulant medicine gaining popularity for the initial treatment of DVT is low molecular weight heparin, a newer type of heparin.

During the scientific meeting, Dr. Alma Casareo, medical director of Sanofi-Synthelab, presented the breakthrough anticoagulant and antithrombotic drug nadroparin calcium. Commercially known as Fraxiparine Forte, this medication can be given daily.

Casareo said the drug is easy to administer, requires no blood testing to determine if the patient is adequately treated, has fewer bleeding complications and is much less likely to cause thrombocytopenia (decrease in blood platelets).

Schizophrenia: Hollywood sets foot in mind field

PARIS—Mental health groups are hoping the movie "A Beautiful Mind" will smash down the walls of ignorance and taboo surrounding schizophrenia.

Paul Corry of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship says the film "overturns most public stereotypes about people with schizophrenia being failures."

"It (also) makes the very valid point that schizophrenia isn't a death sentence. Many thousands of people do recover a meaningful and fulfilling life from the illness."

Famous people diagnosed with, or suspected to have had, schizophrenia include Nijinsky, Van Gogh and Joan of Arc.

Many people mistakenly think schizophrenia involves having a split personality and they often associate the condition with violence.

In fact, it entails suffering delusions or noises that distort reality and sow paranoia in the mind of the patient, prompting him to behave, as seen by other people, irrationally, weirdly or even frighteningly.

Acts of violence by diagnosed schizophrenics are rare, and are minute when compared with those committed by young men high on alcohol or drugs, says Corry.

Experts say there is still a long haul before schizophrenia is conquered.

Scientists suspect there could be several causes for schizophrenia, including genes that disrupt or create an imbalance in neurotransmitters, chemicals that send and receive signals among brain cells.

The chief suspects lie on Chromosome 22 of the human genome. They are the genes PRODH2, which controls an important brain enzyme, and DGCR6, which appears to play a role in the early development of the nervous system.

Environmental factors are also a factor.

A family row or a breakup with a girlfriend or boyfriend can mark the onset of schizophrenia but exactly how these events trigger such a destructive molecular cascade is one of many unresolved questions.

Some facts about schizophrenia:

- One percent of the population, regardless of country and culture, suffers from schizophrenia at some point in their life.
- It equally affects men and women, but often emerges somewhat earlier in men (in the late teens or early 20s) than in women. The earlier it surfaces, the more devastating it can be.
- While not a cure, anti-psychotic drugs can reduce hallucinations, but not in all patients. But these medications often have side effects.
- Patients with less severe symptoms may undergo nonmedical treatments, including psychotherapy to cope with stress triggers and social and vocational training to help them in day-to-day activities.

AFP

Hotdogs and sugar in the body

By Massie K. Santos
Contributor

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

IN AN OLD "Pugad Baboy" comic strip, Tiny catches her younger brother cooking hotdogs during Lent and tells him to stop since it's inappropriate to eat meat during the season. The brother ignores her and continues to cook, asking her when she last had a hotdog made in the Philippines that contained meat.

With the release of a new study by researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health, which found that a diet of processed meats increases a person's risk of becoming diabetic, the idea of eating hotdogs containing meat alternatives may not be such a bad idea.

Disorder

Diabetes is a disorder characterized by a person's inability to correctly use the sugar in his body. The Islets of Langerhans in the pancreas play an important role in determining a person's energy level since they produce the two hormones that regulate the blood glucose level.

In Type 1 diabetes the a-cells (alpha cells) are making too much glucagon, which leads to an increase in blood glucose levels. In Type 2 diabetes the ß-cells (beta cells), which produce insulin to lower blood glucose levels, have a communication problem with the rest of the body and the cells can't use the produced insulin.

Without insulin, the body can't have the energy it needs to keep functioning, which can cause damage to the nervous and circulatory systems, as well as other organs.

Though there are over 150 million diabetics worldwide, only 18 million of them have Type 1 diabetes. The World Health Organization (WHO) expects that figure to reach 300 million by the year 2025. The disorder has also been found to be more prevalent among African Americans, Asians, Latinos and the elderly.

Researchers estimate that there are four million diabetics in the Philippines, but only 25 percent of them are aware of their condition, and, even then, not all of them are being treated for their disorder.

It comes as no surprise then that the Department of Health listed diabetes as one of the top 10 causes of death for 1997.

Dietary habits

In the Harvard study, Dr. Frank Hu and his colleagues worked with more than 50,000 men, many of them Caucasians, over a period of 12 years. Participants were screened, and those diagnosed with cancer, heart disease or diabetes were eliminated. The remaining 42,000 men were asked to fill out questionnaires every two years about their dietary habits and their health in general.

Participants diagnosed with diabetes received a second questionnaire about risk factors, specifically the kind of lifestyle they led and their family history.

High-fat products

While Dr. Hu and his colleagues found that people who consumed more high-fat products were more likely to be diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes compared to their low-fat diet companions, these findings were not considered too alarming since the figures fell within acceptable Body Mass Index (BMI) data.

More startling, however, was the fact that Dr. Hu's team found that participants who ate processed foods such as hotdogs and luncheon meat on an almost-daily basis had a greater chance (46 percent) of being diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes than those who did not.

Although the researchers admit that the risk factor may be due in part to the foods eaten with the processed meats, usually high in fat themselves, they are confident that that the nitrites used to preserve the meats are a factor in the increased risk for becoming diabetic.

Processed meats have already been linked to increased risk for Type 2 diabetes in a previous study.

The nitrites used to preserve processed meats interact with amines in the stomach during digestion and form nitrosamines, many of which have been identified as toxins, and anything that affects ß-cells are bound to affect blood glucose levels sooner or later.

But according to Dr. Ruth Kava, director of nutrition at the American Council on Science and Health, "the difficulty with this type of study is that you can't be sure how accurate it is."

By depending on memory to answer comprehensive surveys, the researchers may be working with faulty data from the very beginning.

More research

Dr. Hu agreed that more research was needed to support or disprove his team's work and did not call for a ban on eating hotdogs, sausages, or any other type of processed meats.

Still, until more studies have been done, perhaps it's a good idea to have hotdogs or luncheon meat for breakfast less often, and to stay away from the unnaturally red hotdogs on the market that moms used to warn their kids about. After all, moms are supposed to know best, aren't they?

The real face of the Pinay?

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

BEFORE WOMEN'S Month is officially over, let us reflect on the comments by reader Jacqueline O. [jacq_stone@yahoo.com] concerning my speech during the awarding ceremony of the Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) in October.

Your Oct. 27, 2001 article, "A Celebration of Filipino Women," highlighted the TOWNS awards as a sign of women's strength through freedom and power. I especially liked the poem written by Anasuya Sengupta. I adhere to it because it underscores a woman's desire to break free from the clutches of the submissiveness of the past.

The fact that you were able to point out the (advances by) women is worth celebrating indeed. But we should not limit ourselves to the perspective of that celebration. We should not blind ourselves to the reality that exists alongside our celebration—the realities that often are unseen in the statistics, sidelined by our public officials, overlooked by media and concealed from public consciousness.

As Grace Nono-Aves stated, "Only from self-knowledge can spring forth true pride in ourselves."

Even if statistics show that households headed by women have a lower percentage of poverty than those by men, we should not forget that for the most part, the latter includes women as members of (these) households, not to mention those who do not belong to any.

We also know that poverty does not engulf men only. Women are in fact more vulnerable to poverty than men.

Although women may be ahead in secondary (education) completion rates than men, it does not translate into automatic job opportunities in a society ruled by patriarchalism and, sometimes, even chauvinism. (I think this is so even with the "girl power" of having women presidents.)

Claiming that OFWs are unsung heroes is a cliché that is clearly rhetoric. I do not think we can call our OFW women (domesticated, commodified and abused) heroes. They are not heroes; they are victims. They pursue greener pastures because they are victims of poverty here. Where are the political resources favorable to their living here? Reforms will not succeed in a rotten system. (I am a political science major, so bear with me here.)

An example of our society is reflected in the local game show "Weakest Link." I have been watching that show, but even in only a couple of episodes I noticed the existence of patriarchalism. Women contestants are voted off by the males not because they are the weakest link. One contestant, asked by the host why he voted off a female contestant, said he would rather lose to a male than to a female.

What can I say? A clear-cut male chauvinist outlook—and I do not think this is an isolated case.

In the part where contestants who were voted off make a farewell speech, two women from different episodes stated that they sensed that their being female had something to do with the voting process.

Let's face it, the reality is that women's plight in our society is grim. We emphasize the achievements of other women to give some sort of inspiration to empower ourselves. But I urge every woman to be aware of what goes on beyond the goods and positives, and look at the negatives. Ironic as it might seem, we could learn to be optimistic—in the sense that it would encourage us to pursue a true celebration of Filipino women, where women are respected, dignified, not just loved and recognized, but liberated from the stranglehold of society's patriarchal conventions.

Combination therapy works well for high blood pressure

HIGH blood pressure, or hypertension, is the most widespread of all cardiovascular diseases in the world. It is the leading cause of stroke and a major cause of heart attack. In the United States alone, about 40 million people have high blood pressure. In the Philippines, it is estimated that 22 percent of the adult population have high blood pressure and it is the fifth leading cause of morbidity or illness among Filipinos.

Failure to bring down the blood pressure to optimal levels has been cited as a major reason for the increased complications such as heart attack, stroke, heart and kidney failure. Clinical trials have shown that adequate control of hypertension is achieved in only about 50 percent of patients receiving monotherapy, or a single drug for lowering the blood pressure.

Enhancing drug efficacy

Combination therapy, which may come as a fixed-dose combination in a single tablet, has been favored by many medical practitioners to enhance efficacy of the drug and compliance by the patients.

Combination therapy uses antihypertensive medications that are proven to work well together in a synergistic or complementary manner. Usually, drugs that control blood pressure through different mechanisms are combined in a single drug for optimal efficacy and tolerability. Relatively less side-effects are also experienced since a smaller dose of each of the component drugs is used.

Hypertension drugs

One of the established treatments for hypertension is telmisartan. Telmisartan is a drug that controls hypertension by blocking the effects of a hormone called angiotensin II. This hormone constricts the blood vessels, while promoting retention of salt and water, actions that tend to raise blood pressure. The efficacy of telmisartan has been documented locally through a multicenter study done by prominent cardiologists Drs. Ramon Abarquez Jr. and Rafael R. Castillo and other heart specialists.

Another effective hypertension medication is hydrochlorothiazide or HCTZ, which is commonly prescribed in combination with other antihypertensives. HCTZ has a diuretic effective in flushing the excess water and sodium from the body, thus decreasing the amount of fluid in the blood vessels and reducing blood pressure.

Antihypertensive effects

Hypertension patients, especially those with systolic hypertension and generally those who do not respond well to monotherapy, can now benefit from the antihypertensive effects of the combined preparation of telmisartan and HCTZ, which has recently been made available in the Philippines. Clinical trials conducted abroad, involving more than 2,500 patients, showed that this combination is effective in controlling hypertension in the majority of patients. Another study, involving more than 1,700 patients with mild-to-moderate essential hypertension, validated that the combination is well tolerated with a side-effect incidence similar to placebo.

Telmisartan+HCTZ is a fixed-dose combination drug, which contains 40 or 80 mg telmisartan and 12.5 mg of HCTZ in a single tablet. Greater patient compliance can be expected since patients need only to take a single tablet once daily.

In addition, the combination of drugs with complementary mechanisms of action has been proven to reduce the incidence of adverse effects and thus improve tolerability. HCTZ, when used alone and in bigger dosages, causes low potassium concentrations (hypokalemia) in the blood that can cause weakness and irregular heartbeat among others. However, when HCTZ, at a dose of 12.5 mg is combined with telmisartan, no clinically significant case of hypokalemia was noted.

The advent of the telmisartan +HCTZ combination offers physicians another treatment option for patients who are unable to control their hypertension with a single agent. This spells great hope for the estimated six million Filipinos with elevated blood pressure.

PLG News & Views

The case of living with the 'wolf'

By Rafael R. Castillo, M.D.

MEDICAL FILES

WOLVES are sly creatures that attack their prey when and where they least expect it. Because of their inherently baneful nature, they are oftentimes portrayed as wild, uncontrollable animals and treacherously sneaky thieves and killers. Thus, a disease, which has these same characteristics, was named after these sly creatures.

Lupus or *systemic lupus erythematosus* is derived from the scientific name of the wolf *(Canis Lupus)*. The name fits this strange and complicated disease that hits its victims in many ways and can be very difficult to treat. Lupus is a case of the immune system making a really terrible mistake, going berserk and inflicting damage on one's own self. Hence, it is called an auto- immune disease. The immune system, which is supposed to protect one from infections and other diseases like cancer, starts to attack one's own normal tissues, especially the skin, the joints and the kidneys.

Having the 'wolf'

Liezl B., age 26, was an epitome of grace, beauty and perfect composure. She found out that she had the "wolf" after she came from a fateful vacation in Boracay. She took a leave from her job as an events organizer because she had not been feeling well the past few months. She was constantly complaining of fatigue, feeling feverish and she was gradually losing weight.

After a visit with her family doctor, she was found to be anemic because of her low red blood cell count. Her doctor prescribed an iron preparation and advised her to take a much-needed vacation to help her body recuperate from stress.

However, the sand, sea and sun in Boracay seemed to have done Liezl more harm than good. Hoping that basking in the sunlight in Boracay can give her a healthy-looking tan, she instead developed an ugly-looking butterfly-shaped rash over her cheeks and the bridge of her nose. Aside from that, sores also erupted in her mouth and that stressed her even more. After that, she stayed away from the outdoors but she felt weaker and more fatigued than ever. In the morning, she experienced bothersome joint stiffness and pains, especially in her knees and elbows.

Her dream vacation was starting to turn into a nightmare. And the last straw came when one day, while she was taking a shower, she noticed thick strands of her hair on the bathroom floor. What she was experiencing was too much to be just stress symptoms, she thought. Right that day, she packed her bags and flew back home.

Back in Manila, she was seen by Dr. Ivy Rivera, a well-loved rheumatologist at the Manila Sanitarium Hospital. Dr. Rivera already suspected lupus after carefully studying Liezl's history and symptoms but she requested for a number of tests to confirm the diagnosis.

Unknown cause

Liezl could still not imagine how she got lupus. "Unfortunately, the real cause of lupus is unknown," the doctor started to explain.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Many factors may contribute to the cause of lupus. First of all, female hormones are believed to play a role in the development of lupus because women are affected more often than men. This is especially true of women during their reproductive years, a time when hormone levels are highest. Lupus is also thought to be inherited since there are cases that people with lupus also have a close relative who has the disease.

Research has shown that the disease results when a specific set of susceptible genes is exposed to a combination of environmental factors such as infectious agents, certain drugs such as anticonvulsants, some penicillins, excessive ultraviolet light, emotional and physical stress.

When the doctor told her she had lupus, Liezl felt fear like she never felt before. It was fear mixed with bitterness. She felt lupus was such a cruel and unfair disease plaguing a woman at a time and age when she was just starting to enjoy life. Liezl had just gotten her promotion, which opened opportunities for her to realize her dreams. With her position, Liezl could travel and experience the good things in life. But it seemed the disease would hold her down.

Assurance

To keep Liezl's hope high, the doctor assured her that although there was no cure yet for the disease, its survival rate was 80-90 percent higher than in the previous decades. More cases of lupus are diagnosed and treated at an earlier stage because of increased research and awareness of this disease. In Liezl's case, her immune system had not yet caused irreversible damage to her vital organs and her chances of recovery (remission) was fairly high. Although, she will always have the "wolf" in her, the treatment is an assurance that she will feel and experience less symptoms or flare-ups of this disease.

Mild cases of lupus may be given nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) to relieve joint pains. Low-dose aspirin may also be given to neutralize the excessive tendency of the blood to clot. Severe diseases are treated with coticosteroids such as prednisone. Sometimes, more potent immunosuppressive agents such as azathioprine or cyclophosphamide may be required to suppress the body's auto-immune attack. If there is severe involvement of the kidney, nervous system and blood vessels, a combination of steroids and immunosuppressive drugs may be given.

Steroids and immunosuppressive drugs may have side effects, especially when used in higher doses, but these are outweighed by the benefits.

Big scare

Lupus may have given Liezl a big scare but she has come to terms with it and she has prevailed over the "wolf." She draws the needed strength from God and her mother, who is always by her side, especially during flare-ups. Her mother is the only family she has, her father having died when she was still a child. She is an only child but she also has friends who can be counted on especially at times when she hits her low points.

With her friends' and family's prayers and the constant monitoring of her good doctor, Liezl was able to demonstrate quick recovery. She has been responding well to medication and therapy, and so far, she was spared the ravaging damage that the "wolf" was capable of inflicting. Gradually, she has gained back the weight she lost and is now learning to modify her lifestyle so she can effectively cope with her disease.

Keeping lupus at bay

The first step to successfully keep lupus at bay is to have a healthy and positive outlook in life. Since lupus is incurable, Liezl knows that she will always be living with the "wolf" so there's no use feeling bad about it. Instead, she learned more about the disease and she has adopted some lifestyle activities that would help tame her immune system. These therapeutic lifestyle strategies include basic things like a good sleep, adequate exercise, clean water and healthy food choices.

Also, the doctor warned her that since the two top causes of deaths among lupus patients are kidney failure and infection, Liezl should avoid crowded places and people with infectious diseases. She should also avoid food, like peanuts and chocolates, which may cause her allergic reactions.

Blessing in disguise

It has been two years now since that fateful vacation in Boracay. Liezl and her mom are now staying with their relatives in Canada. The climate there seems to suit Liezl well. She also found a job as a Web specialist, a job that does not require her to be in the office every day. She can do her work in the convenience of their home, which means less stress and less exposure to people, especially in crowded places. Liezl regularly sees her Canadian rheumatologist but she still keeps in touch with her doctor here in the Philippines.

Now, it seems that Liezl has finally tamed the "wolf" in her. In fact, she now feels that having the disease is a blessing in disguise. Because of the whole experience of being threatened by and subsequently learning to live with the "wolf," she has learned to appreciate the true meaning and small miracles of life. And she considers her story as one of these small miracles.

(For feedback, e-mail raffymd@i-manila.com.ph.)

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Liza Minnelli weds in New York ceremony

By Franklin Paul

NEW YORK—Entertainer Liza Minnelli on Saturday wed for the fourth time at one of the most ballyhooed nuptials in recent memory, relishing her new role as a bride after rebounding from injuries that threatened her career.

Concert promoter

Minnelli, the Tony- and Oscar-award winning performer and daughter of actress Judy Garland, said "I Do" to concert promoter David Gest before a packed house of celebrities, many cinema legends who were close friends of Minnelli's mother.

"Everything was very delicate," actor Robert Goulet, who performed with Garland in the 1960s, said of the hour-long ceremony. "She is very much in love and you can see it."

Guests, including Diana Ross, Lauren Bacall, Luther Vandross, and Carol Channing, braved a chilly late-winter evening and endured heavy security and metal detectors at the church, but said they were warmed by the bond of the couple, who kissed often—before and after speaking their vows.

The ceremony, at the 147-year-old Marble Collegiate Church in the shadow of the Empire State Building on New York's Fifth Avenue, was the first for Gest, 48.

Tribute concert

He's perhaps best known for orchestrating Michael Jackson's tribute concert at Madison Square Garden in September, and producing the International Achievement in Arts Awards, a celebrity fund raiser.

Gowned in a white dress designed by Bob Mackie, the slimmed down Minnelli, 56, showed little sign of the hardship that just two years ago sparked talk she would never perform again.

She had undergone hip replacement and back surgery, struggled with weight problems and viral encephalitis—a potentially fatal disease that causes swelling of the brain—and battled an addiction to pain-killers.

LIZA/ p.C2

MINNELLI and her husband David Gest after their wedding.

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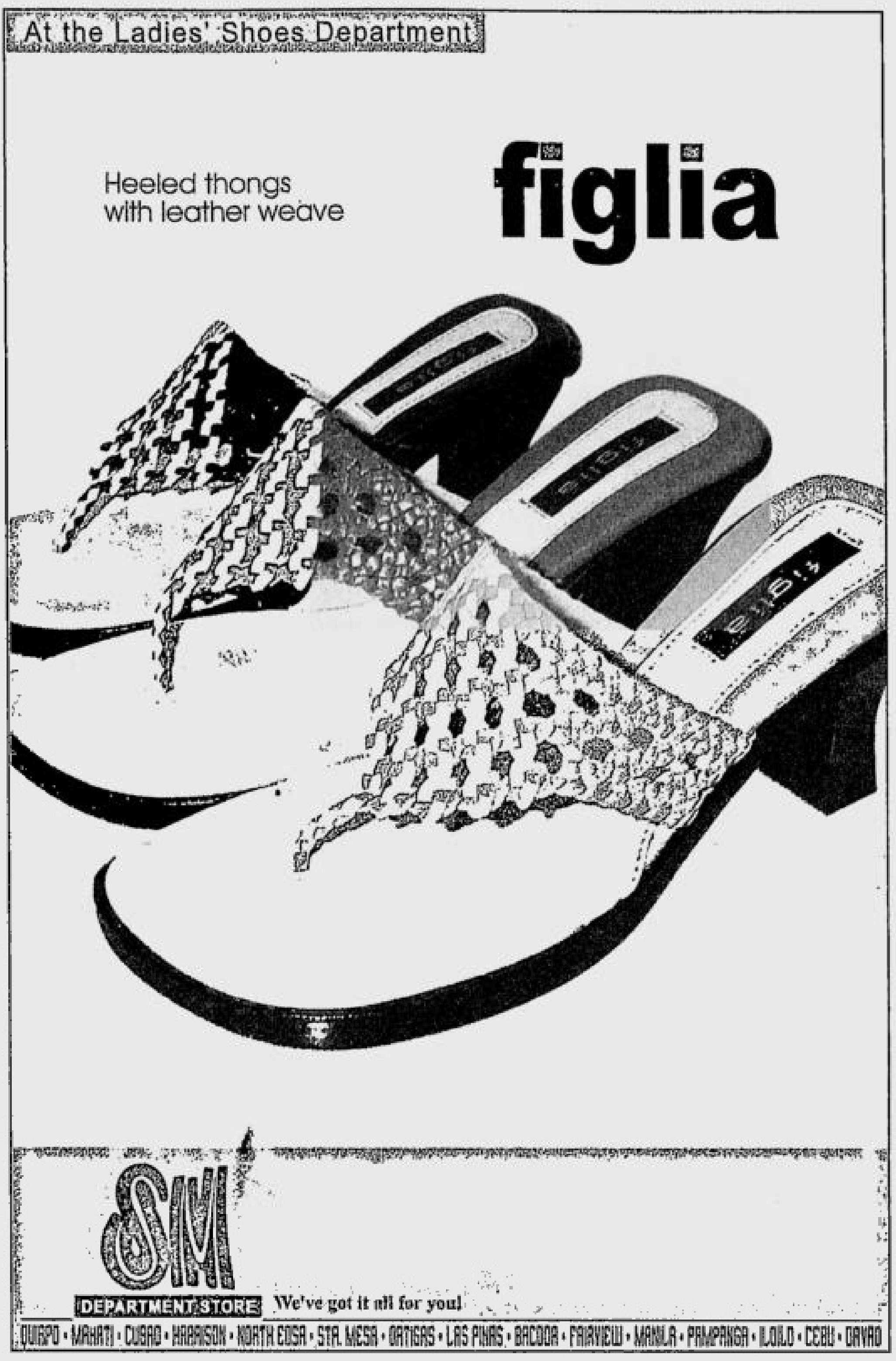
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(Conclusion)

Agot Isidro

"NOONG bata ako, ang itim-itim ko, I never considered myself beautiful because all my sisters were *mestizas. Ang tawag sa akin ng ibang mga bata, 'negra,' pero sabi ko sa sarili ko, "Gaganda din ako!"* That experience helps me even now because I don't have the concept that I'm beautiful. When I have my picture taken, *wala lang*, I'm just myself. I don't have this hang-up that I have to be beautiful all the time.

"But I can never perform and come out in a show wearing an outfit I'm not comfortable in. If it doesn't feel right, I won't wear it. You have to have an eye for style. I'd rather be underdressed than overdressed. Keep everything simple, it always works. My clothes are very basic, even the colors. And I don't like prints so much, *naguguluhan ako*."

TOENGI. With confidence, being beautiful comes naturally.

Pops Fernandez

"I was chubby when I was younger. I always want to change my hairstyle. Everytime I have a change of mood, it's the hair that goes first. I definitely want to dress up.I usually try something different. I'm *maarte*. It's not just vanity, it's just that I want to look good all the time. I owe it to the public.

"My shoes and accessories should always match my clothes. I plan my outfit for the next day and my clothes are already laid out, all I have to do is take a bath. Before I leave the house, I can change outfits twice or thrice. If you look at my closet, it's all basically black. With black, you can't go wrong.

"If I go back to school, I want to take up Fine Arts or cosmetology. But I believe that beauty comes from within. I'm an optimist. "

G. Toengi

"I always remove my make up no matter how tired I am. I use baby oil to remove the mascara on my eyelashes. I use only one brand of make-up and I make sure that I'm not allergic to it. I avoid fried food and cakes but I eat lots of vegetables—*yung* green at yellow because they're good for the skin.

"But being beautiful also means that you're comfortable with yourself. I'm *jeproks*, you can put me anywhere and I'll be OK.

"Hindi ako maselan sa pagkain at sa taong kakausapin ko. I can talk to the president of the Philippines but I can also converse with the cigarette vendor.

"Being secure within yourself is a plus. You should know who you are without comparing yourself to anybody. I always try not to act or look like anyone because I want to make it on my own. I always try to be the best that I can be. If you're confident, being beautiful comes naturally."

SERNA. Uses a different towel for every part of her body.

Snooky Serna

"I don't know if this is a beauty practice but I always eat dessert before the main course. If you want me to have a hearty appetite, give me the dessert first. *Ayoko yung minamadali ako. Noong* active *pa ako sa* show business, *kaya sinasabing* I'm the cause of delay *kasi* I would brush my teeth four times. I shower four times when I'm shooting.

"I use a different towel for every part of my body. *Iba yung sa* arms, *iba yung sa ulo. May pagka-*obsessive compulsive *ako* when it comes to cleanliness.

"Motherhood is a blessing. My daughters help me relax and be playful, they keep me happy. Having a husband like Richard (Ricardo Cepeda) also helps. He's domesticated, a good husband and father. He doesn't mind doing the housework or carrying my daughters when we go out. I appreciate those little things. Having a peaceful and loving family life can give you a beautiful glow."

Paula Peralejo

"If I'm tired and exhausted, I put cold cucumber on my eyes. *Binababad ko sa yelo yung pepino* and I cover my eyes with it. I also remove my make-up with cold cream and make it a point to eat lots of bananas because they're rich in potassium."

Tanya Garcia

"I never use soap on my face *kasi masusunog ang mukha ko*. I use a gentle facial wash. I try to sleep when I'm taping or shooting to rejuvenate my body. I avoid peanuts, oily food and chocolate because they're bad for the skin."

Rosanna Roces

"Hindi ako vanidosa, maluho o mahilig sa damit at alahas. Mahilig lang akong tumingin. Kontento na ako sa maong at T-shirt. Pond's *lang ang ginagamit ko sa pag-alis* ng make-up. Mild soap at astringent, *tapos naghihilamos ako ulit. Mahilig akong mag-*crash diet! *Tamad akong mag-*exercise, *ayokong pinapapawisan ako.*

"Importante sa tao ang maging spontaneous *at masayahin para maging maganda. Bago ko nakilala ang asawa kong si* Tito (Molina), *lagi akong malungkot. Naging masayahin akong muli nang dumating si* Tito. *Importante din yung may oras ka para sa sarili mo. Kapag nasa bahay ako, tulog lang ako ng tulog, walang puwedeng umistorbo sa akin, kahit si* Tito."

DONITA ROSE. Drinks lots of water.

Donita Rose

"I make sure that I remove all traces of make-up with cold cream. I apply astringent and moisturizers before sleeping. I also drink lots of water. I don't really believe that what you eat reflects on your skin, unless you eat "bad" food over a long period of time.

"I try to eat healthy. I eat fish and chicken instead of pork and beef. I eat lots of vegetables. I try not to eat carbohydrates but if I have to eat rice, I take a little *lang*.

"I exercise three times a week. I have exercise videos at home and a few exercise machines. I play tennis. It's also important to have some quiet time, to be alone once in a while. I make it a point to relax at home. Sometimes I light a scented candle and just listen to soothing music.

"If I have to lose weight, I don't eat before going to sleep. If I crave for something, I don't deprive myself, I eat a little of it. To be beautiful, you have to love yourself without losing your spiritual side."

Lindsay Custodio

"It's bad to wash your face if you're tired! If I'm really tired, I sleep first, then I wash my face when I wake up. I use make-up remover. It's very important to clean your face before sleeping. I have regular facials to clean my pores."

Liza Minnelli weds in New York ceremony

From page C1

Minnelli has said that during that time, she was confined to a wheelchair, unable to talk, and was very near death.

"As long as she keeps trying, they will make it," said actor Mickey Rooney on the way in to the ceremony. "Happiness is very elusive and we wish them the best of luck."

On her way to recovery, she has shed more than 70 pounds, a feat which she credits to Gest. With health and home on the mend, Minnelli is set to launch a European Tour, produced by her new husband, starting in April.

Maids of honor

At the ceremony, Elizabeth Taylor and Marisa Berenson, who appeared with Minnelli in the 1972 film "Cabaret," stood as maids of honor, while Michael Jackson and his brother, Tito, childhood friends of Gest, were the best men. The high-powered bridal party included actors Tony Franciosa and Robert Wagner, actresses Mia Farrow, Janet Leigh, Gina Lollobrigida, and singers Petula Clark and Michael McDonald.

Others on the list of more than 200 invited guests included music icon Sir Elton John and Patricia Neal, actors Michael Douglas, Kirk Douglas, Anthony Hopkins, composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, and property tycoon Donald Trump.

While it certainly will go down as one of New York's grandest social events, local gossip writers have poked fun at the list of guests, teasing that most had seen their heyday end before current pop-culture queen Britney Spears was born.

"At the party . . . it was like a night of 1,000 facelifts, every person from 50 years ago," gossip writer Cindy Adams—a member of the wedding party—told CNN on Friday, referring to Minnelli's bridal shower.

Cheering onlookers

After tossing her bouquet to cheering onlookers outside the church, Minnelli and Gest headed to a reception at the Regent Hotel on Wall Street. Rocking to an 80-piece orchestra, entertainers performing there were to include Tony Bennett, Roberta Flack, Gloria Gaynor, Dionne Warwick and others.

Minnelli ended her third marriage, to sculptor Mark Gero, in 1992 after 13 years. Her first marriage was to singer Peter Allen in 1967, which lasted for seven years. Soon after they split, she married filmmaker Jack Haley.

The daughter of legendary actress Garland and director Vincente Minnelli, Liza Minnelli has spent most of her life on the front lines of the entertainment world, particularly after her mother's tragic death in 1969 of an accidental drug overdose.

An accomplished theater actress, Minnelli had already won several Tony Awards before she was awarded an Oscar in 1972 for her role as in the film version of the musical "Cabaret."

Her film career in recent years has been far less lauded. Still Minnelli has thrived in concert, belting out signature tunes such as "Cabaret," and "New York, New York."

Minnelli launches her European tour on April 2 with five concerts at London's Royal Albert Hall, followed by shows in Denmark, France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Reuters

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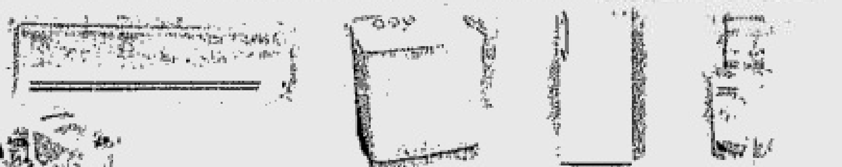


My love for reading

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

READING Grace Kelly's biography developed Inday's "addiction" to books about other Hollywood icons.

ONE of the many positive traits I got from my mom and dad was my love for reading. Ever since I can remember, I was already a reader because my mom would scrimp on money for toys and dresses and other nice things, but never on books.

Like everyone else, I started with fairytales, getting lost in the wonderful world of Rapunzel and Cinderella and Snow White and imagining myself a princess with long hair and glass slippers and eating poisoned apples and dying but being kissed back to life by a handsome prince, and living happily ever after!

Amateur sleuth

As I was growing up, my taste in books changed. I was in early high school when I began my collection of Nancy Drew paperbacks. I'd lull myself to sleep reading the exciting adventures of the amateur sleuth and I'd solve crimes and battle against bad men in my dreams. After Nancy Drew, the male side in me took over and I devoured all the Hardy Boys books I could get my hands on.

Then followed a long season of Perry Mason and Hercule Poirot and Sherlock Holmes. I guess, my adventurous streak and even my sneaky love affair with the forbidden were a result of the surfeit of detective stories I had while growing up. Come to think of it, I was never hung up on Mills & Boon or Barbara Cartland, or other such romantic pulp.

Radio career

When I began my fledgling radio career—which was quite early in my life—I forgot all about books for a while. I had no time to read! I was too busy and excited immersing myself in the surreal world of Guy and Pip.

My family and friends would give me books for Christmas and on my birthday but, at best, I'd start reading the first chapter and that was that. I believed then that the make-believe world of show business was a lot more real and exciting than the make-believe world of books.

But I picked up the reading habit once more many years later when somebody gifted me with the biography of Grace Kelly. I guess, it was still because of my affection for fairytales. How I adored Princess Grace of Monaco! Her ascent from anonymity to show biz fame and then to royalty resonated in my dreams, as it did in my heart.

In fact, there was a time there when I secretly wished my daughter Dolly would end up with a prince—or even just a duke or an earl. I urged her to take up Foreign Service in college because my imagination was working overtime—mentally painting images of her being a diplomat, and being sent to UK and meeting Prince Charles!

Of course, this was long before Diana and the divorce and Camilla and all the delicious royal scandals. Besides, Dolly took up Linguistics instead.

Biographies

After reading the life story of Grace Kelly, I developed an "addiction" to biographies of Hollywood icons. I even made sure I had the first editions. There were the likes of Elizabeth Taylor (I couldn't decide which she loved more, men or diamonds); Marilyn Monroe (her heart never left the destitution of her childhood and she got lost in the frenzy of her celebrity), Elvis Presley (the only man whom the word beautiful suited perfectly); James Dean (he went through his life in a hurry to die); Frank Sinatra (he lived his songs more profoundly than even he realized); Joan Collins (she defied age, the system and the world, and the measure of her success lay more in the magnitude of her courage to try).

And there were many, many more! They all loomed larger than life to me as I cheered the victories and cried over the defeats and failures of their colorful, roller-coaster lives.

I read all the books that have been written about Barbara Walters and Oprah Winfrey, and I identified with what had happened to them.

My only complaint was that these books should have been written much, much earlier—so that I could have learned from their experiences, especially with regards to financial stewardship.

Cavernous halls

One reason I loved going to New York was Barnes & Noble. That humongous bookstore in Manhattan was home! I could get lost the whole day in its cavernous halls and come out happy and contented with a suitcaseful of books—mostly about Hollywood celebs and even the wannabes.

My hunger for Hollywood stories couldn't be sated by books alone, so I read Hollywood magazines, too—People, National Enquirer, Star, Globe. I guess, this is not really something to be proud about, but there was a time that I just loved Hollywood sleaze. But then, c'mon! Don't we all, even if secretly?

At that time, I also read the Reader's Digest for inspiration and Cosmopolitan for fashion. Yes, I was as common as any commoner. Besides, inspiration and fashion, I really didn't have much flair for, then.

Much later, I discovered the joy of reading inspirational books—the kind churned out in the millions by the likes of Og Mandino and Norman Vincent Peale. This got me to reading the Bible—no longer perfunctorily, as I used to, but with a genuine desire to really get to know more about God.

I became a seeker. I developed not just a hunger but a thirst for Him. Hunger, one can control and even live with. Thirst?—one would go insane without water!

Journey

I've read a lot of Harold Sala, Max Lucado, Bruce Wilkinson, Robert Schuller, Shiela Walsh and many more. Through them, I was able to beat a path closer and closer in my journey to God! Through them, I discovered the Lord talking to me.

Then, I discovered Bo Sanchez and Rosanne Romero. I went to their book launching last Monday at the Shangri-La Mall branch of National Bookstore. Their books came with the invitation to go to the launch and I

MY/ p.C4

'WWJD' is a way of life

By Mona Gonzalez

WHAT could you do if you had no money—and one very expensive idea? Nanette Pacoli, executive producer and scriptwriter of "WWJD.com.ph" (aired every last Sunday of the month, 11 p.m. on RPN 9), would say, "A lot."

And she speaks from experience, at least where "WWJD" is concerned. It all began during a lunch Net had with three former college buddies—Rose Fernandez, Sockie Fernandez and myself.

The subject turned to the proliferation of books, gadgets, *et al*, around the theme, "WWJD" or, "What Would Jesus Do." Sockie, a multi award-winning director of commercials and documentaries mused, "Wouldn't that make a good TV show?"

Initials

Shortly after, Net flew to Singapore, and came across a store selling bracelets with the initials, "WWJD" on them. She took it as a sign. "This is the longest show I've worked on," Net says of WWJD's first episode on "Streetchildren," which was aired last Feb. 28 at 11 p.m. on Channel 9. "It was two years in the making." Their next show is slated for telecast on Channel 9, March 31, on the topic, "Divorce."

Although largely inspired by Christian sentiment, the show is not religious. "We wanted a factual show that would make people feel empowered and believe they could do something to help, even by themselves. They don't need to be part of a larger organization to do so, although that would be okay, too."

Sockie, who directed the first episode, said, "People would like to do good things, but they don't know how. I wanted an insightful program that would show all sides objectively, yet have a sense of direction. Something that would explore, but be more of a friend rather than judge."

Documentaries

Tito Pel, a segment host on the program "Asin at Ilaw," hosted WWJD's pilot episode. He says, "When we started on this we had no money, and everyone volunteered their work." Tito likes watching documentaries and telemagazines but he notes, "Afterwards, I'd feel frustrated and angry at the government or whoever was causing the problem. I didn't look at myself."

He adds, "We wanted to inform, to study a topic seriously, and show people the power of individuals." At the same time, he adds that doing the first episode on "Streetchildren" was a revelation.

"There are 200,000 Filipino streetchildren, and half of them are in Metro Manila. I used to wonder how parents could allow their children to live on the streets. Then I learned that most of these kids are children of other streetchildren. Some are 14, 15 years old and they have a baby in the street. Where do you even begin to help them?

"What do you expect the parents to teach them? It's a cycle," he says.

Hurting

Net says, "I expected these children to be *mayabang*, rough—we were prepared for that. Instead, I met people who were hurting, taken advantage of, beaten up, made to become weak or fragile. Toughness in a shell. There are so many protective layers but, deep down, they are human and hurting inside, more than you and me."

Sockie recalls how they shot the children simply by going in a van, and choosing an area spontaneously. "One woman had a job, but her husband left her and she landed in the streets. She wasn't a street dweller before. One 10-year-old kid said, 'When I ask for money or food, I don't touch people. I know they get upset when I touch them.'"

WWJD also interviewed Dr. Violeta Bautista of Lifechange who also heads the psychology department of UP Diliman. Dr. Bautista said, "Streetchildren are not the problem—they are the victims. Many of them are courageous young boys and girls experiencing difficulties in life."

Also featured are President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (as DSWD Secretary) and DSWD Undersecretary Felicidad Villareal. Included too is a home for streetchildren called "Jesus Loves the Little Children," a collaboration of friends run by Chito Sanchez.

Halfway house

The halfway house began when Chito and pals gave sandwiches to the children, then invited them to live in the center. Chito adds, "Before, you couldn't control or discipline them. Now, they know they have a future to look forward to."

Net says, "I was amazed that, with few resources, even in small ways you can touch one to two people and change their lives. We saw these children learn to eat at a table with a spoon and fork. To the kids, that's a big thing."

"WWJD's" strength lies in its "in-your-face" script (by Net), the editing, the talented host, and its keen direction.

Sockie says, "We didn't want something preachy—there are enough preachers. But I like doing things for empowerment, to promote the world as a better place."

During "WWJD's" soft launch, Net said the actual production cost of the pilot episode—"not counting the time and effort of volunteers"—was P200,000. But proof of the quality of its production was seen when someone at the launch donated her first bonus of P10,000 in support of the show.

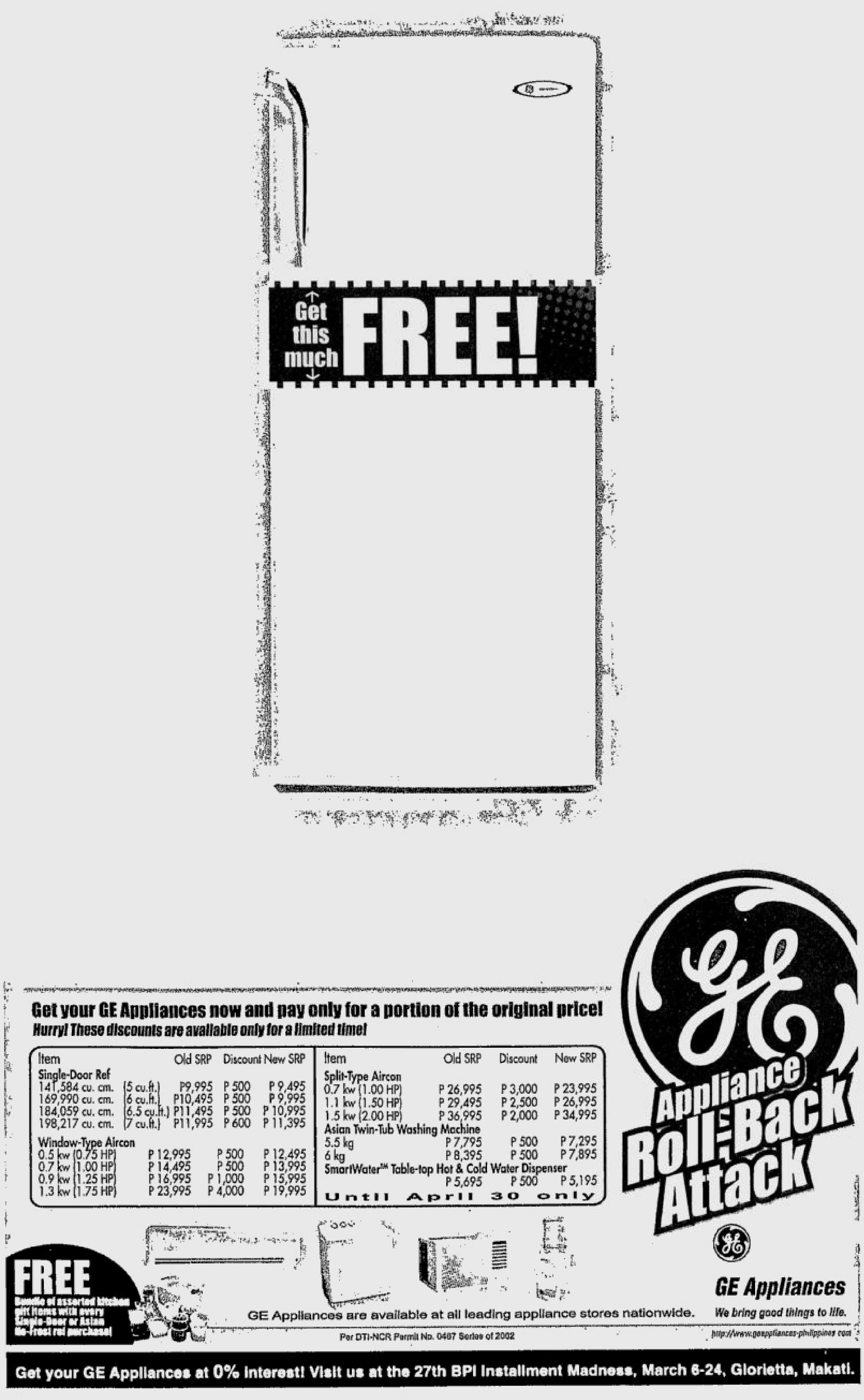
Sponsors

Net says she had managed to find sponsors to pay for the airtime of the next three episodes as well, but that the production would still rely on the efforts of volunteers to make it happen. Other topics in the offing are mental health, homosexuality, child abuse and drug trafficking.

"'WWJD' is a way of life," Net says. "In any decision you make, ask What Would Jesus Do. Not just where streetkids are concerned, but also in how you live each day."

And what can we do for street kids? Undersecretary Villareal advises, "Don't give alms, as the

WWJD/p.C4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Robbie Tan continues to build up sexy talents

By Andy P. Bais

ROBBIE Tan's track record for turning completely un-known sexy wannabes or former 'sweet' stars into screen goddesses is beyond question. The former Ana Maceda, whom Robbie re-christened Rossana Roces, is solid proof of his reputation as a discoverer of not only sexy stars but of effective and competent actresses as well.

ROCES. She used to be known as Ana Maceda before Tan made her a star.

Sexiest

The Seiko Films producer has been discovering sexy stars for the past 15 years. Of those he turned into instant celebrities, he considers the late Stella Strada the sexiest.

Robbie can no longer recall the number of sexy stars he has helped get to the top.

"*Alam mo ang* talents, *di mo na dapat bilangin, kasi mahirap*—of course, *may mga* victories, *may* bitterness. *Minsan kapag masyado mong ini-isip, sasama lang ang takbo ng buhay mo. Alalahanin mo na lang ang mga magaganda,*" he says philosophically.

The outspoken producer discovers his sexy talents through various means. Most of them are presented to him by talent scouts. "*Pinapadala nila sa akin ang mga* photos *nila* and if I find them interesting, *pinapapunta ko sa* office. If they're okay, I get them," he shares.

He says that he uses "gut-feel" in spotting a particular talent who has the potential to succeed. For him, there are no hard and fast rules.

Grace

"Basically, what I look for *sa isang* talent is, number one—*may* grace *siya sa pagkilos at maganda ang* body language. Number two—*maganda ang ayos niya at dapat maganda din ang mga mata at ngipin.* Turn-off *ako kapag* may dentures because I always associate a good set of teeth with a healthy mind and a healthy personality," he shares.

Robbie delivers a mouthful when asked about his manner of developing his talents: "My first priority is in physical development. Usually, I bring them to beauty experts. For example, for Rossana, I asked the help of Fanny Serrano. *Pina*-trim *namin ang kanyang* bushy eyebrows *at ginawan namin ng paraan na mabawasan ang kanyang* freckles.

"*Sa* outfits *naman, pinaturuan namin siya sa aming* production designer. Osang, *kasi*, came from Pegasus, so, *ang gusto niya, mga* glossy *at* tight-fitting outfits *at may* fishnets *pa*. But in fairness, she's very smart and intelligent, so, *alam niya kaagad kung ano ang* okay *at hindi sa kanya.*"

For most of Rossana's films for Seiko, she wasn't allowed to use her real speaking voice. "*Kasi*, shrill *ang kanyang boses. Hindi talaga dapat gamitin yon. Ang* requirement *sa* character *niya, boses na* seductive. *Pero* through constant practice, *natuto rin siya,*" Robbie recalls.

Acting workshops

He shares that for his talents to "graduate" from Seiko, they must have undergone several acting workshops, and tutoring on how to conduct themselves in public.

Robbie doesn't allow his talents to appear on TV until they are ready. "*Kasi, kapag nabuking na hindi pala sila ganun kaganda,* like *ang pino*-project *namin sa isang* talent *pang*-five-star *ang* caliber *niya, tapos yun pala* two-star *lang, wala na,* nipped in the bud *ang* career *niya*!

"That's why we get experts to teach our talents how to appear on TV. *Pati anggulo nila, binabantayan namin,*" he says.

Convincing Gretchen Barretto to turn sexy was not a hard task for Robbie. "*Sinabi ko lang sa kanya na wala na siyang* room for *pa*-sweet roles. That time *kasi, nandoon na sina* Snooky *at* Maricel Soriano. So, I told her, 'If you decide to go sexy, you are the queen!' *O, di ba, mas maganda yun kaysa* second fiddle *lang siya sa kanila?*

"What's important is that the talents should believe me. If they have faith and trust in me, *madali ko silang i*-mold *sa kanilang bagong* image *at madali rin silang sisikat.*

"As a result, Gretchen did a lot of pictures for Seiko, *at naka*-second contract *pa. Mabait kasi siya sa akin,*" he grins.

Transformation

Along with Gretchen, Robbie is proudest of Rossana's achievements, and her transformation from being just a sexy star to her being acknowledged as a serious actress. He admits, though, that their parting of ways was "not that sweet."

"But Osang and I have already patched up our differences. Okay *na kami ngayon*. I was touched when she told me that she was willing to do a movie with Seiko, *para naman daw makabawi ako sa kanya.*

"*Sa akin naman kasi, kapag ang* talent *nago*-grow *at nagiging* successful, happy *na ako. Siguro,* most of my talents initially resent me because I'm very strict *at may pagka*- disciplinarian. *Pero*, later on, they realize *na di naman ako madamot.*

"*Kasi, kung madamot ako at maraming* bitterness *sa buhay, hindi na ako magde*-develop *ng bagong* talents, because *ang dami nila*—they come, and then they leave me!

"But I know that *ganun lang naman ang* role *ko. At hindi pa rin ako nadadala. Hindi ko iniisip na iiwan ako ng mga bagong talents ko, at iba ang makinabang. Siguro, yun na ang* virtue *ko, kaya* I don't look old, *kasi wala akong* bitterness *sa buhay,*" he proudly says.

Robbie doesn't meddle in his talents' personal affairs but, when it involves their showbiz career, it's another story. "*Wala akong pakialam sa* love life *nila*, but *kung pangit naman ang dating nila, ibang usapan na yun.*

Eyebags

"I don't care if a talent eats a lot, *pero iba na yung kapag nakita ko na ang laki-laki ng mga* bulges *at naglalakihan ang mga* eyebags *niya! Pagsasabihan ko talaga siya at kapag matigas ang ulo,* after *na matapos ang* contract *niya, ayoko na sa kanya,*" he warns.

To illustrate, he cites the case of a former ward whose career seems to be in the doldrums these days. "*Matigas ang ulo, kahit sinabihan ko na lumalaki na ang bilbil niya, kain pa rin ng kain, wala siyang pakialam.* Feeling *kasi niya, aarte lang siya. Lagi niyang sinasabi na hindi naman talaga niya gustong mag-artista. Pinilit lang siya ng nanay niya.*

"*Kapag ganun ang* attitude, why should I waste my time. *Sayang*, because she's a good actress," he sighs.

Lasting relationship

Robbie is already resigned to the fact that a lasting relationship with his talents is rarely possible. "Once I get somebody, *alam ko na*, sooner or later, *aalis siya sa akin. Kasi*, most bold stars are like elephants—they're nice to look at but one should not 'own' them. They have a lot of needs and wants.

"And if you take them seriously, you get upset or worse, you could even go crazy!"

His soon-to-be released movie, "Itlog" is topbilled by Diana Zubiri, his latest discovery. What does Robbie think of her?

"Okay *siya*. Subtle *ang* beauty *niya na may pag-ka*-understated. *Pero katakut-takot na* workshop *ang ginawa namin sa kanya* for three months. But she has a clear advantage over the rest.

"*Mataas ang* motivation *niya* to succeed. And that's what's most important to me. *Malaking* plus-factor *sa kanya yon,*" he smiles.

My love for reading

From page C3

found them so engrossing that I read them over and over again—especially the parts that I blue-pencilled. Truth to tell, Rosanne's "Amusing Grace" has now become a part of my morning prayer and reflection time.

There's something special about reading books by Filipino authors. Perhaps, the thought of their reality being the same as mine impacts profoundly on me. Foreign authors are different—they can't possibly fret about the same garbage, or worry about the same polluted air, or care about the same fuel prices going up. There's a deeper connection when a fellow Filipino shares his experiences and insights.

Happiness

"Simplify," Bo's latest sure-fire bestseller, talks about finding happiness by simplifying one's lifestyle and being content with the simple things in life. I felt a sense of consternation, a tinge of regret, as I pored through the book. Questions washed over me.

Like, what is God telling me? Why did I have to read something like this only now? How can I simplify now when all *my* things are practically gone? Is this another example of God's sense of humor?

But the book is really a road map to pure, undiluted happiness. I finished it in one sitting, but I haven't assimilated everything yet. I believe, that will take a lot longer. Not because the book is hard to understand but because it's quite difficult for me to live its message. But that's an altogether different story.

To regular readers of Kerygma, Rosanne Romero must be a familiar name. She writes the "Kitchen Scribbles" column for that magazine and "Amusing Grace" is a collection of her best and most inspiring column pieces. I don't read Kerygma—but I will from now on—so I don't know Rosanne from Eve. That made my reading of her book a truly inspiring experience.

Multiple sclerosis

Rosanne has multiple sclerosis, an incurable, degenerative disease of the nerves that causes lesions and wounds in her brain. The pain due to her ailment must be unbearable, but she is the most joyful person in the world. Why and how? Jesus is the answer. As I read the first few chapters of her book, I was astonished by the amount of wit and humor she could muster despite her obvious agony.

"*Hindi ba nade*-depress a*ng babaeng ito?*" I asked myself. But I soon realized that I was missing the point altogether. Ah, the Lenten season is coming. Perhaps, now is the time to finally see the point. Yes, the point has actually been staring me in the face all the while!

'WWJD' is a way . . .

From page C3

kids won't go to school. They leave home because there are rules in the home—and none on the streets."

Do you, like me, turn away when a child asks for alms? Dr. Bautista suggests that the first way to begin to feel empathy for these children is to look at them. "Look them straight in the eye—that will have impact on a child. Talk to them, touch them. And look for groups involved in this work, and donate there."

Watch for WWJD's next episode, on "Divorce," slated for March 31, 11 p.m. RPN 9. You'll be empowered.

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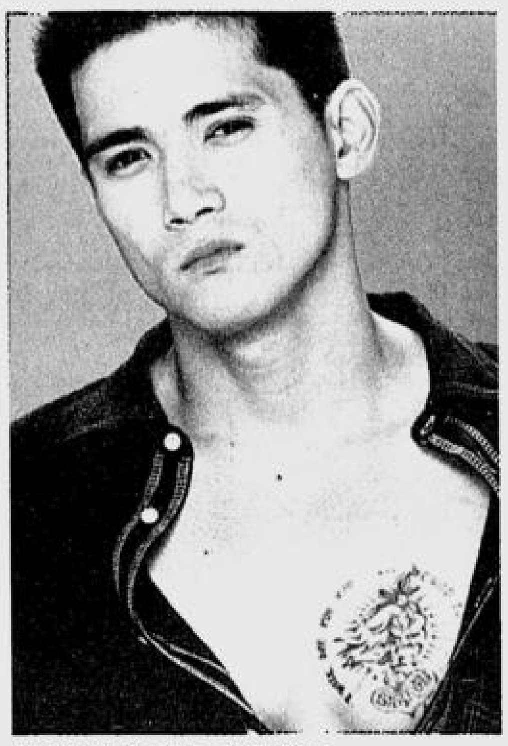
Robin Padilla revives his 'bad boy' image

By Remy M. Umerez

VIVA Films succeeded in transforming Robin Padilla from an action star to a matinee idol in "Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw" and "Pagdating ng Panahon." In keeping with his new image, he was required by studio bosses to behave in a gentlemanly way.

Robin did as he was told, and the gambit succeeded. Later, however, he chafed and wanted to return to his roots and do the honest-to-goodness, hard-action stuff that he had first became known for. Happily, Viva eventually obliged.



PADILLA. Back to action films.

Memories

His new action starrer, "Hari ng Selda (Anak ni Baby Ama 2)" transports Robin back behind prison walls. The memories of his three-year imprisonment inspired him to co-write the screenplay with his mentor-discoverer Deo Fajardo, who megs the action opus. Only someone who has been there could show exactly what life is inside Muntinlupa. Robin claims that 70 percent of what the viewers will see on the screen happened in real life.

The entire movie was shot from beginning to end inside the new National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa. Some of the inmates who became Robin's friends during his prison years play themselves in the movie. A permit was granted by the DOJ to shoot for a month inside the compound.

In "Hari ng Selda" Robin plays a Muntinlupa inmate named Anghel, falls in love with Angelika dela Cruz when she visits the jail with her classmates on an exposure trip. It is a love affair that's doomed from the very start.

Soap series

When Robin was in jail, he never failed to watch the soap series "Esperanza" and was smitten by Angelika. He promised himself to get her as a leading lady if given a chance to do an action movie again.

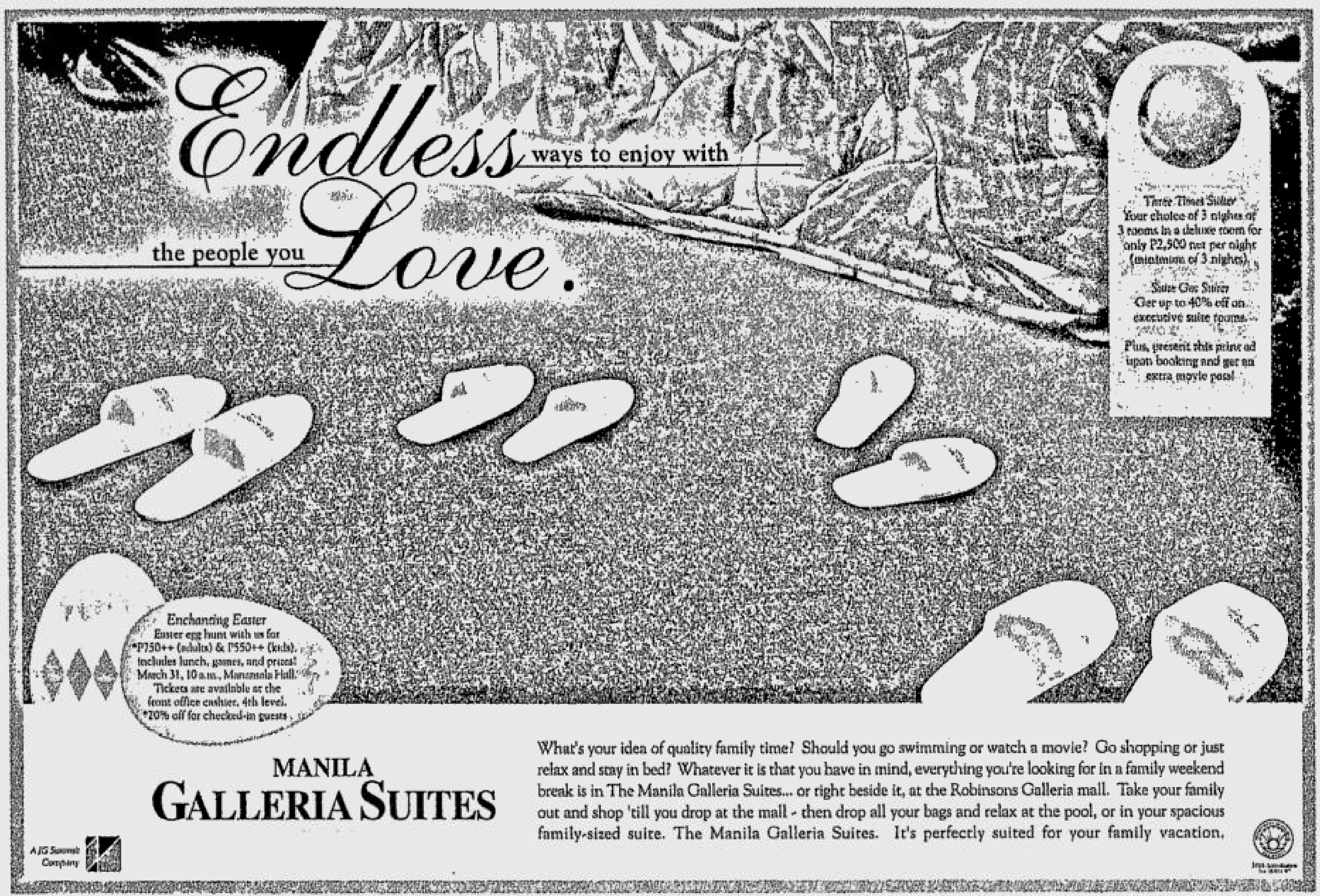
Among the many "firsts" in "Hari ng Selda" is Robin doing a bed scene. Present on the set for that delicate scene was Joyce Bernal, who gave moral support and provided female insights.

"I have to rest for two days to gain strength," he says.

Another movie Robin has completed is "Video King" where he takes a singing. It is produced by Star Cinema and has Pops Fernandez as Robin's leading lady.

A project he hope will materialize soon is his team-up with Rudy Fernandez. The project is so costly that no producer is willing to gamble on it.

PADILLA AND DELA CRUZ. A doomed love affair.



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YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM MARCH 23 — MARCH 29

(The [illegible] is not responsible for last minute changes in [illegible]

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	E! 31
[illegible]	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:00 Mary D' Potter 9:00 Da Pilya en Da Pilot 10:00 Kakasa Ka Ba? 10:30 Saput Kayo Dyan 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Final Drive 6:30 Auto Review 7:00 Barcelona Battle of the Gold Medalists 9:00 Fox News 10:00 The Working President 11:00 Auto Focus 12:00 Fox News	6:30 Wing Commander 7:00 Sailormoon Super S 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Celebrity Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night Specials *Jesus (Part II)*	5:30 Pokemon 6:00 Imbestigador 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:00 Kakabakaba 9:00 Pinoy Blockbuster 11:00 Master Showman Presents	6:00 Star Trek 7:00 Special Unit II 8:00 Strange World 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse *Film Academy of the Phils.* 11:00 PGMA	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:00 PBA Game 2 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 IBC Elorde	6:00 Digital Tour 6:30 G2 Living 7:00 Explorer 7:30 Early Edition 8:30 Gilmore Girls 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 12:00 MYX Sampler	3:00 Q Show Case 7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Mia Farrow* 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Uncut *Fran Drescher* 11:30 Extreme Close Up
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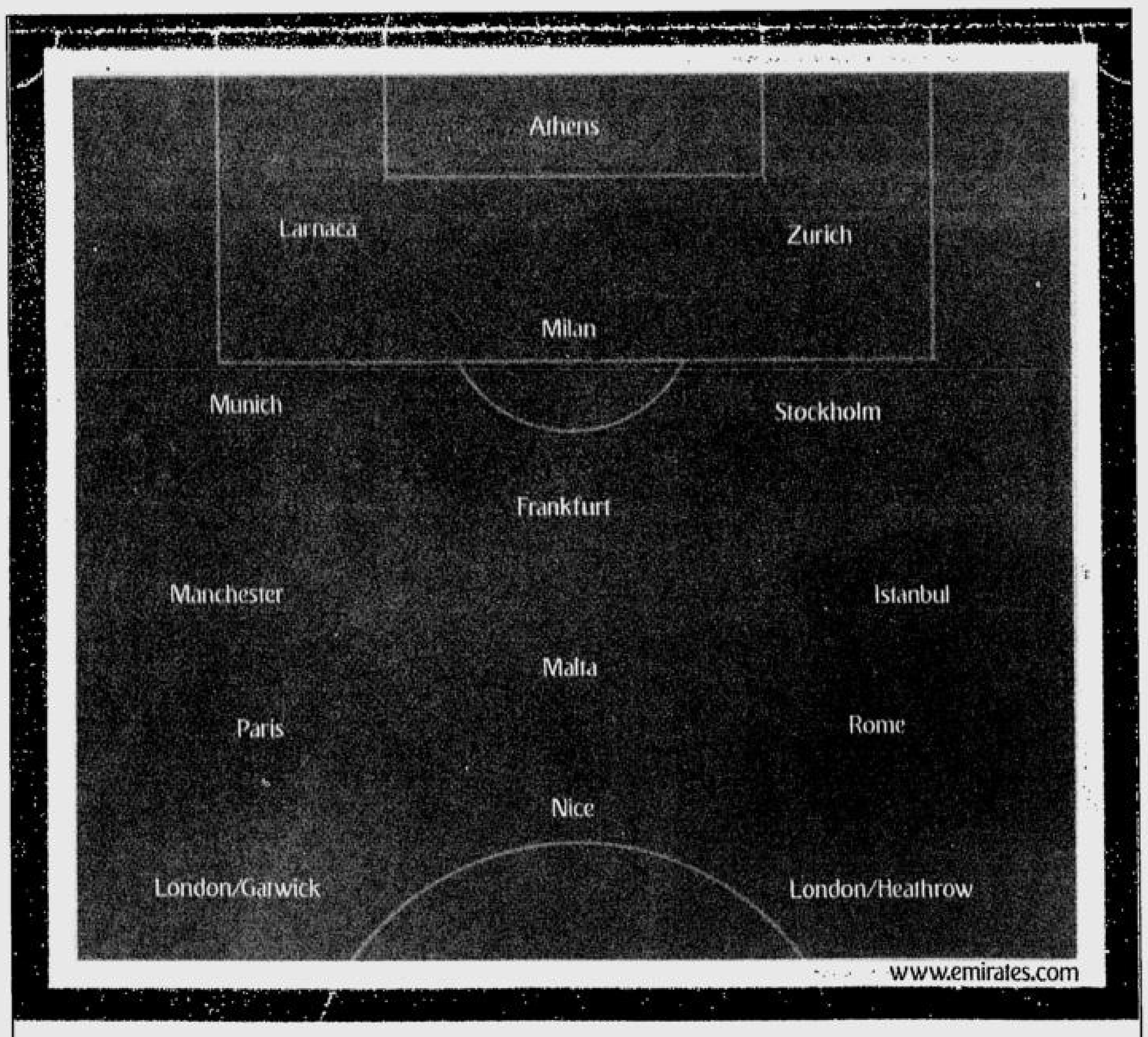

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The best impersonator in the Philippines is—?

By Noelani Torre

THE art of impersonation is one that we Filipinos love to cultivate. It's not surprising, really, given the colorful public personalities we have. Instead of grumbling all the time, we strike back at them with our usual weapon of choice—humor. Surely if we can laugh at their antics, it must mean that there's still hope for the country.

Snickers

Impersonations never fail to elicit snickers and sometimes, even gales of laughter. An impersonation brings down a high and mighty figure and proceeds to deflate him or her in the funniest way possible. We poke fun at these people because it alleviates our depression and allows us to express our anger and discontent in a non-violent manner.

Done well, an impersonation can bring down the house (and the rest of the country), and good impersonators are in great demand. With this in mind, we thought of asking some people who, in their opinion, is the country's best impersonator.

Their responses were varied, though Jon Santos and Willie Nepomuceno got the most votes. Sadly, no female impersonators were mentioned. And the best impersonator is—?

Both sexes

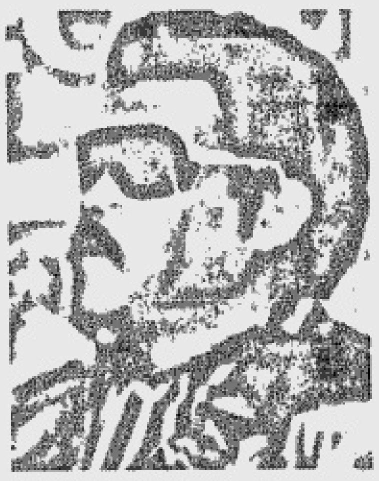
"Jon Santos. Mainly because he has the ability to look, act, and sound like a woman without looking *bading*. His impersonations are always funny and he can impersonate both sexes.

"His facial expressions and movements seem designed to tickle the collective Filipino funnybone and he knows how to play up his physical characteristics in order for him to be humorous. He has gotten Miriam's propensity for overly stressing her '-ations' down pat. I really appreciate him for his women roles. He's the best male impersonator of women."**— *Calina Reyes, 31***

Flexible

"Willie Nepomuceno. He's flexible – he can take on diverse characters with extremely different traits. Of course impersonators are supposed to be flexible, but Willie belongs to a different league. *Gayang-gaya niya talaga.*

"Erap is his best impersonation. *Maraming nanggagaya kay* Erap *pero siya talaga ang* the best. *Yung iba, kuha nga ang itsura't damit pero pag nagsalita, wala na. Siya talaga ang nakakagaya ng boses.* I think he is the best because when he impersonates somebody, he gives it his all. He's totally committed!"**— *Gerald Evangelista, 17***



NEPOMUCENO. Flexible.

On AM radio

"Neil Ocampo. *Maririnig mo siya sa* AM radio *pero lumalabas din yata siya sa* TV *minsan. Nakakagaya siya ng hanggang* six voices, more or less—*at napagsasabay-sabay pa niya yun.*

"*Minsan may* show *siya na lahat ng* 'guests' *niya nagde*-debate. *Siyempre siya lahat yun. Ang bilis! Aakalain mo talagang sila mismo yung nagsasalita. Napapalabas niya ang totoong karakter ng kung sinumang ginagaya niya.*

"*Ang maganda pa, walang* visuals. *Mas madali kasi talagang mag*-impersonate *kung meron, mahirap 'pag wala. Pero siya, kayang-kaya niya. Nasa boses kasi talaga ang* impersonation. *Di katulad ni* Jon Santos *na dinadaan lang sa* costume *at galaw.*"**— *Dino Decena, 26***

Vocation

"Jon Santos. Because he can impersonate a wide range of characters. I also think that he's very serious about his work. It's more of a vocation for him, something that he really concentrates on. I like his impersonation of Charo Santos-Relos. His expression is perfect and, when the lighting is dim, you'd think that it really is her. He's a comedian, not only an impersonator.

"His Miriam impersonation is also very funny because he sounds exactly like her. I don't like Miriam so it gives me a kick to see her made fun of."**—*Katrina Lakandula, 20***

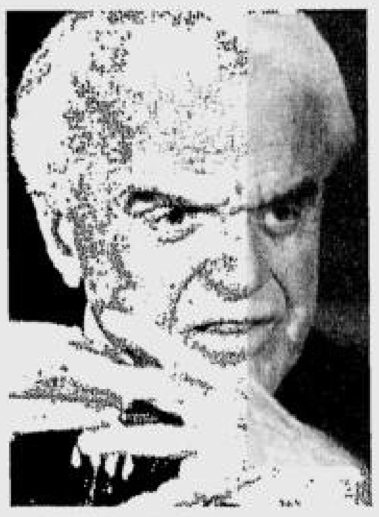
Comic relief

"Willie Nepomuceno. *Matagal*

THE BEST/ P. C7

US movie industry cuts costs, boosts admissions in 2001

By Bob Tourtellotte



VALENTI. The industry performs well during recessions.

LAS VEGAS—The US film industry earned its own Oscar on Tuesday for a top performance in 2001, with lower moviemaking costs, a box office record and the most people in theaters since the early days of television.

Hollywood trimmed the average cost of making and marketing a film by about four percent to $78.7 million from $82.1 million last year, according to the Motion Picture Association of America, which represents Hollywood's major movie studios.

Estimates

The official box office take reached $8.41 billion, well above 2000's $7.7 billion and just ahead of estimates released by box office tracking firms at the end of 2001. The number of people entering movie theaters rose to nearly 1.5 billion, a 5 percent rise from 2000 and the highest total since 1959, according to the MPAA.

"A lot of people thought after Sept. 11, the movie industry would go into the tank, that people would be umbilically connected to their electronic box in their living room and wouldn't dare leave home." MPAA President Jack Valenti told reports at the theater industry's ShoWest convention here.

"For some strange, but to me not bizarre reason, the opposite happened," Valenti said.

Tradition

He and John Fithian, president of the National Organization of Theater Owners, said the industry has a tradition of performing well during recessions because movies are a cheap form of entertainment.

Theater owners, too, are seeing a rebound after recent years of building expensive, state-of-the art theaters with stadium seating and not closing unprofitable theaters fast enough. The result was an overcapacity that pushed a number of major theater chains into bankruptcy.

Regal Cinemas, the largest US theater chain, emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in January. Loews Cineplex Entertainment, another major chain, will finish its own bankruptcy process and emerge as a private company in March.

Hollywood helped the recovery by cranking out good, family-focused movies for kids and teenagers—the core of the US moviegoing audience, executives said.

Fithian chalked up the solid 2001 results to "good movies and good movie houses," adding "it's very simple, R-rated pictures do not sell."

An "R" rating restricts a movie's audience to those over 17 years-old or accompanied by an adult.

Tuesday's end of the year figures precede the Oscars later this month which are Hollywood's highest creative film honors.

Applause

But the business of moviemaking and exhibition gave itself some applause on Tuesday.

Along with the good news on admissions, the movie studios slashed costs of making movies by 13 percent in 2001, according to MPAA figures. The average Hollywood movie cost $47.7 million in 2001, down from $54.8 million in 2000.

The bad news, however, is that marketing costs—the average amount of money to actually put thousands of copies of films in theaters and support them with advertising and promotion—rose to $31 million in 2001 from $27.3 million in 2000.

"That's a cost that seems to be very difficult to put a harness on," Valenti said, later chalking up the increase to higher spending for advertising, especially on television.

There are other threats on the horizon, too, such as the piracy of movies, which costs filmmakers and theater owners billions of dollars each year.

Digital age

The problem of piracy will only increase in the coming digital age, Valenti said, as technology

US MOVIE/ P. C8

SANTOS. Best male impersonator of women.

The best . . .

(From page C6)

na kasi talaga siyang nagi-impersonate. *Naaalala ko pa yung panggagaya niya kay Macoy nung* Martial Law. Hit *na* hit *yun lagi sa mga raliyista. Kuha niya kasi talaga yung boses* ni Marcos. *Malaki din ang tulong ng* comic relief *na binibigay niya noon kasi talagang tensionado ang lahat.*

"*Ngayon siyempre si* Erap *na yung pinakasikat niyang* impersonation. *Gayang-gaya niya kasi lahat, mula* posture *hanggang sa pananalita. Halatang pinagaaralan at pinaghahandaan niya talaga.*

"*Nakakatawa din yung* impersonation *niya kay* Manoling Morato, *na* opposite *naman kay* Erap. *Kaya ako nanonood ng 'Ispup' kahit di na nakakatawa minsan ay dahil nandun siya at si* Jon Santos *na magaling din naman.*"*--**David Espino, 47***

SPOT THE EGG.

Celebrate Easter at the Shang's EGGS-capade Easter Egg Hunt!

The eggs have disguised themselves and hidden in secret places around the mall. Don't let them escape! The chase begins at 1 pm on Easter, March 31, 2002, Level 5. The hunt is open to parent-child teams. Registration is on-going on a first come, first served basis until March 24, 2002 at the Sacred Heart School-Children's Activity Center, Level 5.

Kids will also enjoy Shang's other Easter activities:

'Tickle Me and Color Me, Too!' Egg & Bunny Painting Contest Kids will surely enjoy tickling eggs and bunnies all over with brush and paint. Take them to Color Me Mine, Level 5, to register from March 15-22, 2002. The contest happens on March 23, 2002 (1-2 pm & 4-5 pm) and March 24, 2002 (4-5 pm) inside Color Me Mine, Level 5.

* **'Easter's Funny Faces' Face Painting for Kids** It's the mark of a happy face that had fun at the Shang. Get your little ones a face paint on March 31, 2002 from 1-5 pm at the Shang Food Court. Free for every P1,000 same-day purchase you make at any Shang store on March 31, 2002.

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Jennifer Connelly goes from B-movie actress to Oscar frontrunner

By Douglas J. Rowe

NEW YORK—As Jennifer Connelly sips her tea and talks about the wonderful time she's having in the wake of "A Beautiful Mind," she credits "Waking the Dead" with shaking her career to life.

That 2000 movie "marks the beginning of this kind of chapter" in which she's snagging challenging roles in interesting movies.

"I mourned the wrapping of that movie like the loss of some great relationship that you know can't go on but you know it's really sad that it has to end," says Connelly, who played an ex-radical who—dead or alive? you decide—haunts her lover (Billy Crudup).

Painter's mistress

Connelly went on to play the painter's mistress in "Pollock" and a junkie who debases herself for drugs in "Requiem for a Dream."

Then she convinced director Ron Howard during an audition with Russell Crowe that she could hold her own against the formidable actor in "A Beautiful Mind," the biopic about Nobel Prize-winning schizophrenic John Forbes Nash Jr. and his wife, Alicia.

CONNELLY. Made her film debut way back in 1984.

Very strong presence

"Russell is a very strong presence and I wanted someone who was going to be comfortable on the set and not in any way overwhelmed or intimidated by the process or anyone she was working with," Howard said in a telephone interview.

And while he wasn't interested in casting look-alikes, Howard says: "By the same token, you look at pictures of young Alicia Nash and she was sort of Elizabeth Taylor-like—a very, very beautiful raven-haired young woman."

Given that Connelly has Taylor's stop-a-meteor-dead-in-its-tracks beauty, and that the pH factor of her chemistry with Crowe couldn't be better, Howard decided the job was hers.

So after nearly two decades of mostly B(ad)-movies, the 31-year-old actress who made her film debut in Sergio Leone's 1984 gangster epic "Once Upon a Time in America" is culminating her run of fine performances by collecting an armful of awards.

She already has a Golden Globe, a Bafta (a British Oscar), and honors from the American Film Institute and Online Film Critics Society, and she's the odds-on favorite to win the supporting-actress Oscar come March 24.

During an interview in a tony hotel restaurant in Manhattan, Connelly is simultaneously self-contained and self-effacing. She says she realized about four years ago that something had to change in her career.

Forgettable films

Her forgettable films include "Labyrinth," "Career Opportunities" and "The Hot Spot." Her most memorable part might have been as the love interest opposite ex-beau Billy Campbell (of ABC's "Once and Again") in 1991's "The Rocketeer."

Talk about being stuck on the launch pad!

"I found myself looking at the movies that I like to watch, and the movies that I had done, and they weren't necessarily the same kinds of films," she says, chuckling.

Clearly, the movies she likes are darker and heftier than the ones she had done till then.

"I just came to a point where I thought: 'You know, I don't want to work unless I'm working on things that I feel really good about at this point.' To me it became painful to work on projects that I wasn't proud of."

Her decision coincided with the birth of her son, Kai, who turns 5 in July. "I had enough that was keeping me happy in my personal life."

Patience paid off, and more interesting scripts began to arrive.

Connelly considers herself something of a late bloomer, in part because she started acting as a child.

"I don't think I turned into a teen-ager until I hit my 20s," she says.

"My personality was such that I wasn't a particularly rebellious kid. I was a kid who wanted to do well, who was very disciplined, who always had a vested interest in being nice and polite, and fulfilling my responsibilities and obligations." *AP*

Argentine director dreams of winning Oscar honors

By Karina Grazina

BUENOS AIRES—Oscar-nominated Argentine director Juan Jose Campanella, whose movie "Son of the Bride" will compete in the best foreign language category, never dreamed his film about Alzheimer's disease, religion and recession would hit the big time.

Elderly couple

Based in part on events in Campanella's own life, the Argentine box-office hit deals with the frustrations of an elderly couple who want to marry in the Roman Catholic Church in the midst of the country's economic crisis.

"I had the fantasy I think every director has of winning an Oscar but I never dreamed I'd make it this far," Campanella told Reuters by telephone from New York in a recent interview.

The movie centers on a workaholic in his 40s, played by popular Argentine actor Ricardo Darin, who helps his father, played by Hector Alterio, try to fulfill his mother's dream of a religious marriage after 40 years of civil matrimony.

"It's a story of love between an old couple in which the woman is sick. Everything that happens in the film is very dramatic. Nobody thought this was a commercial project," said the 42-year-old New York University graduate.

Theft of children

The mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's, is played by Norma Aleandro, who also starred with Alterio in "The Official Story," a drama about the theft of children during the military dictatorship that won an Academy Award in 1985 and helped put Argentine cinema on the world stage.

A win for Campanella at the glitzy Hollywood ceremony on March 24 would be the icing on the cake after an award-packed year for Argentine cinema.

"Son of the Bride" is the fifth Argentine film to vie for the much-coveted statuette. The only Latin American film nominated this year, it will compete against France's "Amelie," "Norway's "Elling," India's "Lagaan" and Bosnia's "No Man's Land."

"Son of the Bride," Campanella's fourth film, was named the Best Latin American Film at the International Film Festival in Montreal and won a top award, the Espiga de Plata, during International Film Week in Valladolid, Spain.

Campanella's tale beat out, among other films, another home-grown success story—"The Swamp," a drama by up and coming Argentine director Lucrecia Martel—to win the nod to join the five-strong Oscar category. *Reuters*

US movie . . .

(From page C7)

improves for high-speed Internet services that allow movie fans to download films faster and share them with other computer users the way song swap services like Napster did with music.

Despite the rebound in the fortunes of theater owners, Fithian said the rollout of new digital cinema systems in theaters remains hampered by the lack of technology standards, and questions about quality and cost.

Digital cinema promises better picture quality for film fans, lower distribution costs for studios and the possibility of added revenues for theater owners. Yet a digital system still costs around $150,000 to install in one theater, whereas a projector for 35mm film is 80 percent cheaper at about $30,000. *Reuters*

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SATURDAY*Special*

WASHINGTON. Likely winner of Best Actor Oscar, according to the Associated Press' David Germain and Christy Lemire.

AP film writers offer Academy Awards picks

NEW YORK—AP movie writer David Germain and entertainment writer Christy Lemire predict who will win—and suggest who should win—in top Academy Awards categories on March 24:

Best Picture

Nominees: "A Beautiful Mind," "Gosford Park," "In the Bedroom," "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," "Moulin Rouge"

Germain:

Should win: "Moulin Rouge," a cinematic kaleidoscope that runs the dramatic spectrum from slapstick to romantic comedy to high tragedy.

Will win: "A Beautiful Mind," a worthy film, and the safe and conventional bet in a field of more adventurous competitors.

Lemire:

Should win: "In the Bedroom," the best movie of 2001 because it had the biggest emotional impact. Stunning performances in a moving story, simply and powerfully told.

Will win: "A Beautiful Mind." Everyone can agree on it: an inspiring film based on a true story with strong performances, and nothing too weird that would split Oscar voters.

Best Director

Nominees: Ron Howard, "A Beautiful Mind," Ridley Scott, "Black Hawk Down," Robert Altman, "Gosford Park," Peter Jackson, "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," David Lynch, "Mulholland Drive"

Germain:

Should win: Altman, for roaring back from a fitful couple of decades with a deviously funny satire that has a dozen or so Oscar-worthy performances.

Will win: Howard, who applied his mainstream touch to highbrow material and crafted a critical and commercial hit.

Lemire:

Should win: Howard. Because he's been around forever, he's never won an Oscar, and he's beloved in Hollywood. And this is the best movie he's ever made.

Will win: Altman. Because he's been around even longer, he's never won an Oscar despite numerous nominations, and while he's not exactly beloved in Hollywood, the academy will honor him for a lifetime of work.

Best Actor

Nominees: Russell Crowe, "A Beautiful Mind," Sean Penn, "I Am Sam," Will Smith, "Ali," Denzel Washington, "Training Day," Tom Wilkinson, "In the Bedroom"

Germain:

Should win: Washington, who delivers one of the most likable bad guys since James Cagney in his gangster-flick days.

Will win: Washington. He's earned a best-actor Oscar to go with his supporting-role trophy.

Lemire:

Should win: Crowe. He deserves it more this year than he did last year when he won for "Gladiator." And Tom Hanks has shown that back-to-back best-actor Oscars are possible.

Will win: Washington. Because he doesn't have a best-actor Oscar, and while he doesn't necessarily deserve it for this role, the prevailing sentiment will be that he's due.

Best Actress

Nominees: Halle Berry, "Monster's Ball," Judi Dench, "Iris," Nicole Kidman, "Moulin Rouge," Sissy Spacek, "In the Bedroom," Renee Zellweger, "Bridget Jones's Diary"

Germain:

Should win: Kidman, called upon to be a kook, a crooner, a can-can courtesan and a corpse. Performances don't get much more expansive.

Will win: Spacek, weighing in as one of the best ice queens since Mary Tyler Moore in "Ordinary People" (whom Spacek beat for best actress with "Coal Miner's Daughter").

Lemire:

Should win: Spacek, for the most quietly powerful performance of the year.

Will win: Spacek. I said it last year about Julia Roberts in "Erin Brockovich," and I'll say it again: Give in to the juggernaut.

AP FILM/ P. D2

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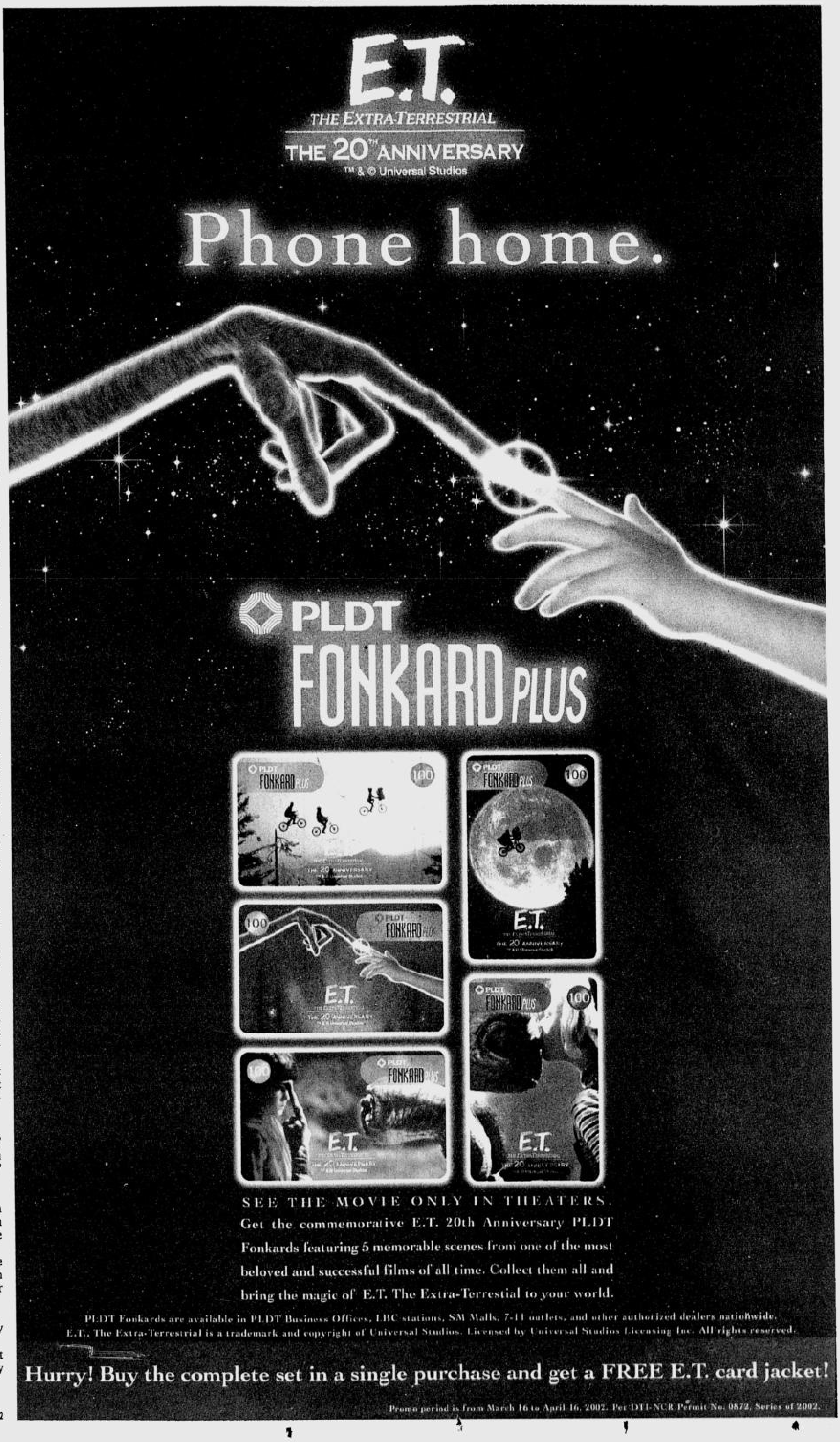

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Billy Crawford gets ready for the bigtime

Nestor U. Torre

LAST Saturday, we watched the 2002 Binibining Pilipinas beauty pageant on GMA-7, from 9 p.m. to almost 1 a.m. We subjected ourselves to the latest edition to the annual "beauty telethon" to see if innovations had been made on the traditional format. Our findings: it was (show—and slow) business as usual.

But we were glad we caught the beauty special because it gave us a chance to see guest performer Billy Crawford in his element. We've seen Billy perform on TV, but mostly in slapdash shows, so it was a treat to see him strut his stuff in a full-production context. It gave us a chance to see how he had developed as a performer on the world scene, thanks to his success as a young recording artist in the States and Europe.

Well, Billy did two numbers in a row at last Saturday's beauty tilt, and we were impressed with how he had come along as a performer. He looked and sounded good, and performed with the polish and vitality of a complete professional.

When he used to sing during his home leaves here, Billy tended to be too ingratiating in the way that he "sold" himself to his audience. This time around, he dropped all that cutesy stuff and simply concentrated on performing, and the effect was remarkable.

Truly, there's nothing like competing for stardom abroad to make a young performer grow up and get his act together in a hurry. As Billy performed last Saturday, we saw why he was making waves in the pop-music world.

The process may be further accelerated by Billy's starring role in his first Hollywood film, the prequel to "The Exorcist," which will be megged by no less than John Frankenheimer this year, with Billy sharing stellar credits with the popular likes of Liam Neeson and Ryan Phillipe.

In the prequel, Billy plays the pivotal role of the youth who figured in the most difficult case of exorcism that the priest played by Neeson has ever had to deal with—even more difficult that the one involving the young Linda Blair in the original film released in 1973!

CARIDAD Sanchez and Roderick Paulate in "Ang Tatlong Krus ni Dolores," an "MTB" drama special.

'MTB's' Lenten episodes

Channel 2's noontime show, "MTB," showcases its hosts' acting talent in these Lenten specials:

Holy Monday, March 25, "Pulis Dyan," is about three bandits who decide to reform by becoming policemen. With Randy Santiago, Ai-Ai delas Alas, Bayani Agbayani, Gary Lim and Bentong.

Holy Tuesday, March 26, "Kilig to the Beach" pits four pairs in a "Survivor"-type game, the challenges of which run parallel to the troubles they experience in their love lives. With Rico Yan, Marvin Agustin, Dominic Ochoa and Vanessa del Bianco.

Holy Wednesday, March 27, "Ang Tatlong Krus ni Dolores" dramatizes the search of three siblings (Amy Perez, John Estrada and Roderick Paulate) for their missing mother (Caridad Sanchez.)

'Falsettos' auditions

New Voice Company announces auditions today, March 23, from 2 to 10 p.m. for the Tony Award-winning musical "Falsettos," which will start its run at Music Museum this June. Call 899-0630.

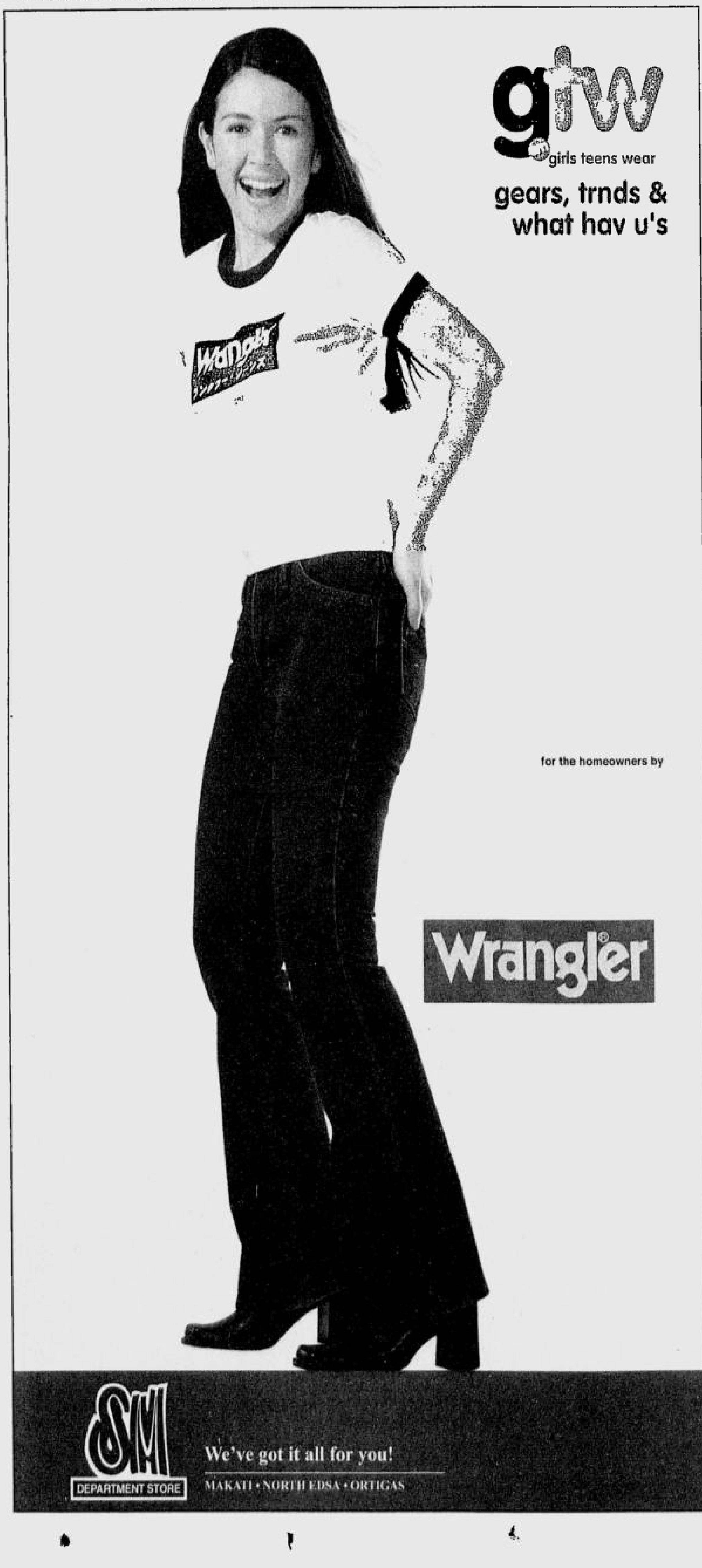
Needed are seven strong actor-singers—three males, three females, and one boy from 9 to 12 years old. Prepare a song with minus one or music sheet.

'Martir' in Manila

The *senakulo* or passion play is given a contemporary twist in "Ang Martir sa Golgota," which will be presented at 8 p.m. on March 27 at Plaza Hugo in Sta. Ana, Manila.

The three-hour play weaves the

BILLY/P. D3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Robert Seña shines anew in his second album

By Rito P. Asilo

SEÑA. Combination of powerful tenor voice and fine acting talent.

WE arrived at the beautiful, maze-like ABS-CBN studios in a whiz, expecting to catch the last portions of the launching of Robert Sena's eponymous second album from Star Records. The invitation said 11:30 a.m. We checked our watch, and it said 1:10 p.m.

Welcome change

When we learned about Robert's latest endeavor, a welcome change from his creative security blanket, the theater, our curiosity got the better of us. We did get a copy of his first album almost a decade ago and couldn't really remember the songs in it (except for the lyrical "Hanggang Saan Aabot," a remake from an old Janno Gibbs album), not because we weren't impressed by the power of the voice that brought him acclaim, but because we felt that the songs didn't give justice to his talent. They didn't fit him.

When we read the list of this second compilation, it got us excited. We always pictured Robert, whom we worked with in Nestor Torre's hit revue, "Etiquette for Mistresses," capable of singing songs that were the domain of Enrico Caruso and Mario Lanza.

Perfect pair

"The Impossible Dream" (a song many singers refer to as "the impossible song" because of its exacting vocal requirements, from the musical "The Man from La Mancha") and Robert—what a perfect pair that would make, we thought! And to choose to record songs from the stage was simply a stroke of genius.

We were in luck! We were led straight to Studio One, and were surprised to see a theater not unlike those you see in Rockwell's Power Plant. Apparently, a mini-concert by Robert was about to begin, and we were just in time to see the screen go up. After 10 minutes of short video clips of Robert's theatrical triumphs in "Ms. Saigon," "Rama at Sita," etc., Robert came out onstage, clad in black long tees and jeans, looking fit and confident.

That he has a powerful voice—a pure, clear tenor—was a given. When we heard the introductory strains of "This is the Moment," from "Jekyll and Hyde," we braced for vocal histrionics. But Robert surprised us with a felt performance made even more powerful by the smooth restraint he must have learned from the discipline he got from the theater. This demonstrated years of hard work and a fine line of influences from the directors who have shaped Robert into a consummate performer.

Enviable stage presence

With enviable stage presence, he would clasp and clamp his hands in his characteristic mannerism to emphasize an emotional point from one song to the next. Armed with a performing mastery unique in a country where singers are a dime a dozen, Robert glided from song to song.

The repertoire included a Sinatra medley (with beautifully flowing arrangement that made "Witchcraft," "I've Got You Under My Skin," "You Make Me Feel So Young" and "Mack the Knife" seem like they belonged in one musical suite), and ended with another medley ("Our Father/I Believe"), an interpretation so far removed from the pop take of Martin Nievera's version.

It was remarkable to note Robert's willingness to experiment with his material. This was evident in his interpretation of popmeister Vehnee Saturno's "Ikaw Pa Rin Sinta," a radio-friendly tune that just doesn't suit him.

But if "Ikaw Pa Rin Sinta" dipped, the Bacharach-like track, "Please Let Me In," penned by Vince de Jesus and, would you believe, The Dawn's Jett Pangan, more than made up for it. The ear-catching sax solo and Robert's soaring vocals did it for us.

High notes

Hearing the high notes of "The Impossible Dream" sung in falsetto by a singer people expect to hear only a natural high voice from was a bit of a downer, though. Robert did apologize for the beautiful, albeit unadjusted and unnaturally high, vocal arrangement of Gerard Salonga. "Last minute changes we didn't expect," he quipped.

When Robert gave in to the audience's clamor for an encore, he didn't disappoint. The song: Stevie Wonder's "Lately," the sweetly somber, but extremely hard-to-sing, '70s classic. When he sang the line, "I hope my premonition misses," with all the raw emotion and vocal prowess he had, we were on the edge of our seat. This was what we expected from him!

His boyish appeal and his playful ad-libs (like when he thanked his wife, Isay Alvarez, herself a great performer, who acts as his manager. He joked, "*Magaling siyang* P.A.!" which is show biz jargon for "production assistant" or *alalay*. He even wondered aloud how his new album would fare commercially) put his audience at ease and made him more mainstream than the classy confines of the world of theater allows.

Scripted spiels

We suggest, though, that scripted spiels can work for this kind of performance. It does not have to be rigidly-written concepts but some format that he can base his spiels on. Yes, we realize it was just a mini-concert but it was a show just the same.

Another pleasant surprise was the presence of Bond Samson's Ugoy-Ugoy Band, one of the country's hottest and most versatile groups, who accompanied Robert. (They can be seen everywhere, from the theater to the concert scene.)

When Robert stood in front of the wired microphone for his final number, a hand firmly clasped around its stand, we couldn't help but see him in the role of Prince Karl, the character "acted" by Edward Purdom and "sung" by Mario Lanza in Richard Thorpe's "The Student Prince." Robert's advantage over the two is that he can do both!

Konica holds photography competition for kids at Snack 2002, April 8-13

SNACK (Summer Nature and Arts Camp for Kids) and Columbia Global Photo Sales are partners once again for the Konica Photography Contest for Snack 2002, April 8-13, Taal Lake Yacht Club, Talisay, Batangas.

Theme

The contest sponsored yearly by Columbia Global Photo Sales is open to all Snack 2002 kid participants. This year's theme, "Take Nothing but Pictures, Leave Nothing but Footprints," extols the beauty of nature and the environment. For inquiries, call 721-0801, 726-7164.

All entries must use Konica Centuria or Konica VX films and be printed at Konica Photo Express or Columbia Photo shops and accompanied by negatives.

Entries will be judged according to the following criteria: creativity and imagination, 50 percent; composition, 30 percent; and lighting, 20 percent. All participating photographs will be exhibited in May at Museo Pambata in Manila.

Prizes

At stake in the contest are one Konica Centuria 20 camera with one roll Centuria 200 135-36 film for first place; one Konica Pop mini silver camera with one roll Centuria 200 135-36 film for second place; and one Konica Centuria 10 camera with one roll Centuria 200 135-36 film for third place.

Consolation prizes are complimentary stays at the Matabungkay Beach Resort and Hotel, Lian, Batangas, and Sitio Lucia Garden Resort, Sta. Maria, Bulacan courtesy of the Department of Tourism Media and Press Relations Office.

Other outdoor activities at Snack 2002 are mountaineering (Banny Hermanos), sailing and kayaking (Nestor Soriano), pottery (Lanelle Abueva), archery (National Archery Association of the Phils.), gymnastics (Phil. Gymnastics Institute—UP-PGH), taekwondo (Monsour del Rosario), taebo exercises (Jackielou Blanco), acting (Lara Fabregas), tie-dyeing (Arri Herrera), and the Lubid teambuilding adventure games.

Snack 2002 is supported by nature grants from Purefoods, Standard Insurance, Coleman, Ascof Syrup for Kids, L.A. Gear, Conquer Mountaineering Equipment, 88.3 Citylite, Joey@92.3, 105.1 Crossover and the Junior Inquirer magazine.

AP film writers offer . . .

(From page D1)

Best Supporting Actor

Nominees: Jim Broadbent, "Iris," Ethan Hawke, "Training Day," Ben Kingsley, "Sexy Beast," Ian McKellen, "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," Jon Voight, "Ali"

Germain:

Should win: Kingsley, who's as gut-punch scary playing mobster Don Logan as he was benign playing Gandhi.

Will win: Kingsley. Vote for him, academy members, or Don Logan's paying you a visit.

Lemire:

Should win: Kingsley. "Sexy Beast" was one of the best movies of 2001, and Kingsley was impossible to stop watching—in a movie no one saw.

Will win: McKellen. "Lord of the Rings," with its 13 nominations, has to win something in a major category, and it won't get best picture or best director.

Best Supporting Actress

Nominees: Jennifer Connelly, "A Beautiful Mind," Helen Mirren, "Gosford Park," Maggie Smith, "Gosford Park," Marisa Tomei, "In the Bedroom," Kate Winslet, "Iris"

Germain:

Should win: Mirren. She delights with prim-and-proper restraint before breaking hearts with an emotional meltdown at film's end.

Will win: Connelly, whose powerful performance caps a string of bold roles informing Hollywood that she is far more than just a pretty face.

Lemire:

Should win: Connelly. And it's about time she receives the recognition she's deserved for years.

Will win: Connelly. Granted, she has an unfair advantage because she's really in a leading role, but she shines. *AP*

SMITH. Nominated for "Gosford Park."

MCCARTNEY. Finalist in the Best Song category.

MCKELLEN. Best Supporting Actor nominee.

Brit nominees could end up as Oscar bridesmaids—again

By Jill Serjeant

LOS ANGELES—The Brits bring a touch of class to the Oscars this week—but many are betting they will return home largely empty-handed from a Hollywood captivated by feel-good movies, epic spectacles and men behaving badly.

Glorious year

In a glorious year for British talent, actors, directors, rock stars and screen writers picked up 13 major Academy Award nominations—many of them going to lords and ladies knighted by Queen Elizabeth for their distinguished careers in entertainment.

"The British always have a pretty good showing. It's because Hollywood provincials are always knocked out by British accents—not to take anything away from the acting," said Time film critic Richard Schickel.

Disturbing domestic drama

But with the exception of upstairs/downstairs social satire "Gosford Park" and the fantasy adventure "Lord of the Rings; The Fellowship of the Ring," most of the British contingent are nominated in movies that may be either too dark or too understated to win Oscar gold.

"There is a certain kind of movie that wins Oscars and it is one that is morally and psychologically uplifting and inspiring and it sends you out with maybe a little tear in the eye, but hope in your heart," said Schickel.

Veteran actor Tom Wilkinson, nominated for his role in the disturbing domestic drama "In the Bedroom," is the sole British nominee in the best actor category, competing against front-runners Denzel Washington and Hollywood's latest bad boy, Russell Crowe.

"Wilkinson's is a truly wonderful, naturalistic performance. But he hasn't got a prayer," said Schickel.

"Visible acting—if you go crazy or play a drunk—as opposed to invisible acting, will always win with Academy voters. Whereas Tom Wilkinson, who's just a real guy, tends to get overlooked by these voters," he added.

The best British chances of bringing home a golden statuette probably lie with rock superstars Sting and former Beatle Sir Paul McCartney, who are competing against each other in the best song category.

Sting has already won a Golden Globe for "Until" from the movie "Kate and Leopold," while McCartney has been nominated for his song "Vanilla Sky" from the movie of the same name.

Funny accents

According to "Ultimate Guide to the Oscars" author Tom O'Neil, there are "quite a few people with funny accents who have a serious chance of winning."

Yet most look destined to end up, as they often have, as bridesmaids rather than brides. Director Sam Mendes was the last major British Oscar winner for "American Beauty" in 2000 and the last lead acting Oscar for a Brit went to Emma Thompson for "Howard's End" in 1993.

In the best supporting actor category, Sir Ian McKellen, Sir Ben Kingsley and Jim Broadbent have all been nominated for their respective roles in "Rings," "Sexy Beast" and "Iris"—the story of novelist Iris Murdoch's descent into Alzheimer's disease.

"Broadbent and McKellen are both neck and neck for supporting actor. In fact, Ian McKellen is probably the front runner now, considering his Screen Actors Guild award," said O'Neil, who also hosts the goldderby.com website.

Broadbent's "Iris" co-star Dame Judi Dench, nominated for her fourth Oscar in five years, faces stiff competition in the best actress category from golden girl Nicole Kidman and comeback kid Sissy Spacek, while the harrowing nature of "Iris" could also lock out Titanic star Kate Winslet's performance in that film from the supporting actress race.

Three awards

Dame Maggie Smith and Helen Mirren have both been nominated for supporting roles in the Anglophile feast "Gosford Park" and British screenwriter Julian Fellowes has already won three awards for his screenplay.

"Julian Fellowes for 'Gosford Park' seems to be the favorite in that (screenplay) category," said O'Neil.

Flying the flag may be losing its relevance however, given the international nature of 21st century moviemaking with its complex financing deals, co-productions and an impressive roll-call of actors able to master any accent convincingly.

"There was a time when it was a big issue. When Laurence Olivier's 'Hamlet' was the first foreign produced film to win an Oscar in 1949, it was considered a big shock. But not any more," said O'Neil.

"Gosford Park" was directed by American maverick Robert Altman, "Rings" was directed by New Zealander Peter Jackson with an international cast, and British director Ridley Scott has been nominated for his work on the very American war movie "Black Hawk Down."

Scott, denied a directing Oscar last year despite the fact that his movie "Gladiator" won best picture, could suffer from the fact that the critically acclaimed "Black Hawk Down" is just too grueling a depiction of close combat for Academy voters to stomach.

"It is a tough movie for people to separate themselves from and come away saying that despite that, it is really good," said Schickel. ***Reuters***

Eve Ensler visits Manila

EVE Ensler the award-winning playwright of the hit play, "The Vagina Monologues," was in town recently to celebrate VDAY in the Philippines. VDAY, an international movement to end violence against women, is spearheaded by Ms Ensler.

Special guest

While in Manila, Ms Ensler was a special guest at the New Voice Company VDAY benefit production, "Kababaihan . . . A Benefit Performance of The Vagina Monologues" at the Folk Arts Theater. Joining her were over 70 Filipina stars from stage, screen, television, media, broadcasting, politics, literature and visual arts.

Regine Velasquez, Angel Aquino, Angelu de Leon, Nanette Inventor, Mitch Valdes, Roselle Nava, Belinda Panelo, Cher Calvin, Angel Jacob, Grace Nono, Cynthia Alexander, Winnie Monsod, Zenaida Amador, Cheche Lazaro, Baby Barredo, Bibeth Orteza Lynn Sherman, Lara Fabregas, Harlene Bautista-Sarmenta, Tami Monsod, Pinky Amador, Leah Navarro, Liza Maza and Malu de Guzman among others, lent their voices to the cause of women.

They joined Ensler onstage as they rocked and rallied to help end violence towards Filipino women. Monique Wilson directed the event.

Success

Such was the success of VDAY that the New Voice Company production of the "The Vagina Monologues" recently did a combined English and Filipino version for the Philippine Congress (March 12th) and the Philippine Senate (March 13th)—where the production (starring Tami Monsod, Lynn Sherman and Harlene Bautista-Sarmenta) was invited to celebrate Women's Month. The play could help push bills on anti-domestic violence in the Philippines.

Fresh from the success of VDAY, the New Voice Company is offering Empowerment Workshops as part of its Summer Theater School 2002. These workshops aim not only to empower women, but also to create and devise new works for and by women for theater, film and television.

Other summer classes include Theater Workshops for Kids, Teens and Adults, Stage Management and Directing. All classes begin April 1st and run for eight weeks. Call896-6695.

Billy . . .

(From page D2)

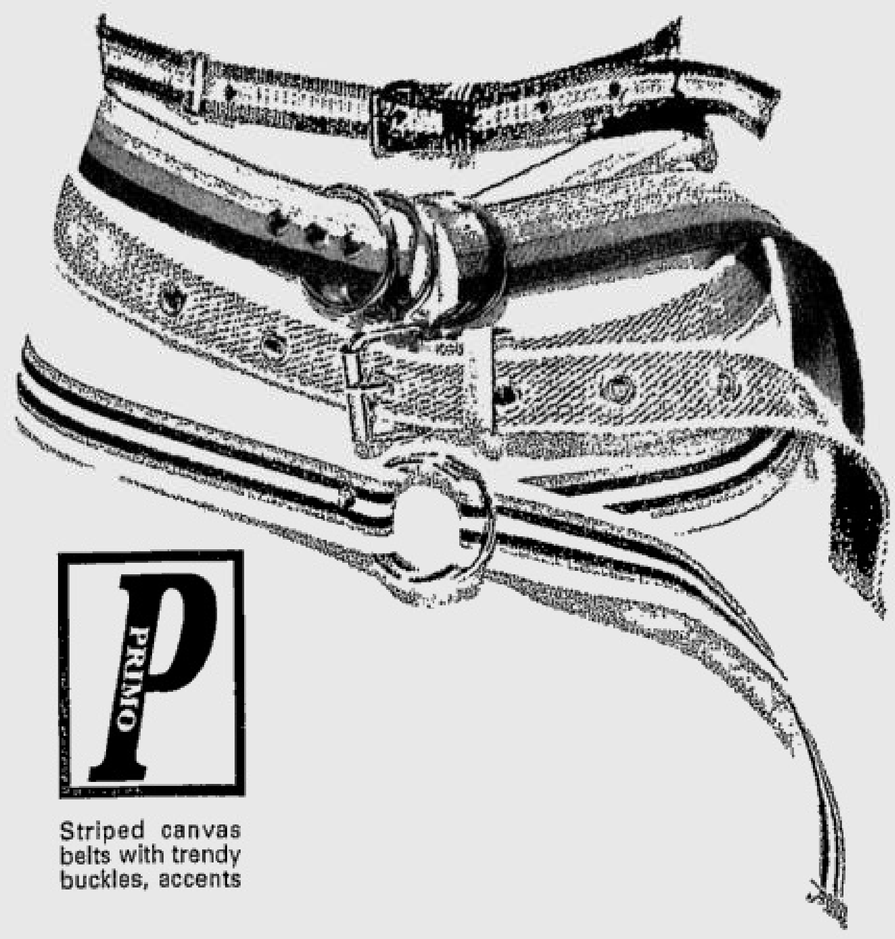
life and passion of Jesus Christ together with current Philippine issues and realities. Now on its fourth annual staging, "Ang Martir sa Golgota" is a yearly presentation of the office of Manila Councilor Lou Veloso and the mobile Theater Foundation (Manila), in cooperation with Tanghalang Sta. Ana. Call 527-4925.

Easter with Miffy

Miffy, the cute, white bunny that's become a popular icon in a series of children's books that have sold 80 million copies worldwide, will visit SM Makati and Sta. Mesa at 3 and 4:30 p.m. today, SM Harrison Plaza and Bacoor on March 24 at 3 and 5 p.m., SM Fairview and Manila on March 30 at 2 and 5 p.m., and SM Las Piñas, Sucat and Megamall on March 31 at 1:30. 3:30 and 5 p.m.

'Clashical'

"Clashical," a unique classical and rock concert at 7 tonight at the AFP Theater, fuses the exceptional and diverse talents of Wolfgang, the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra and Anna Fegi.



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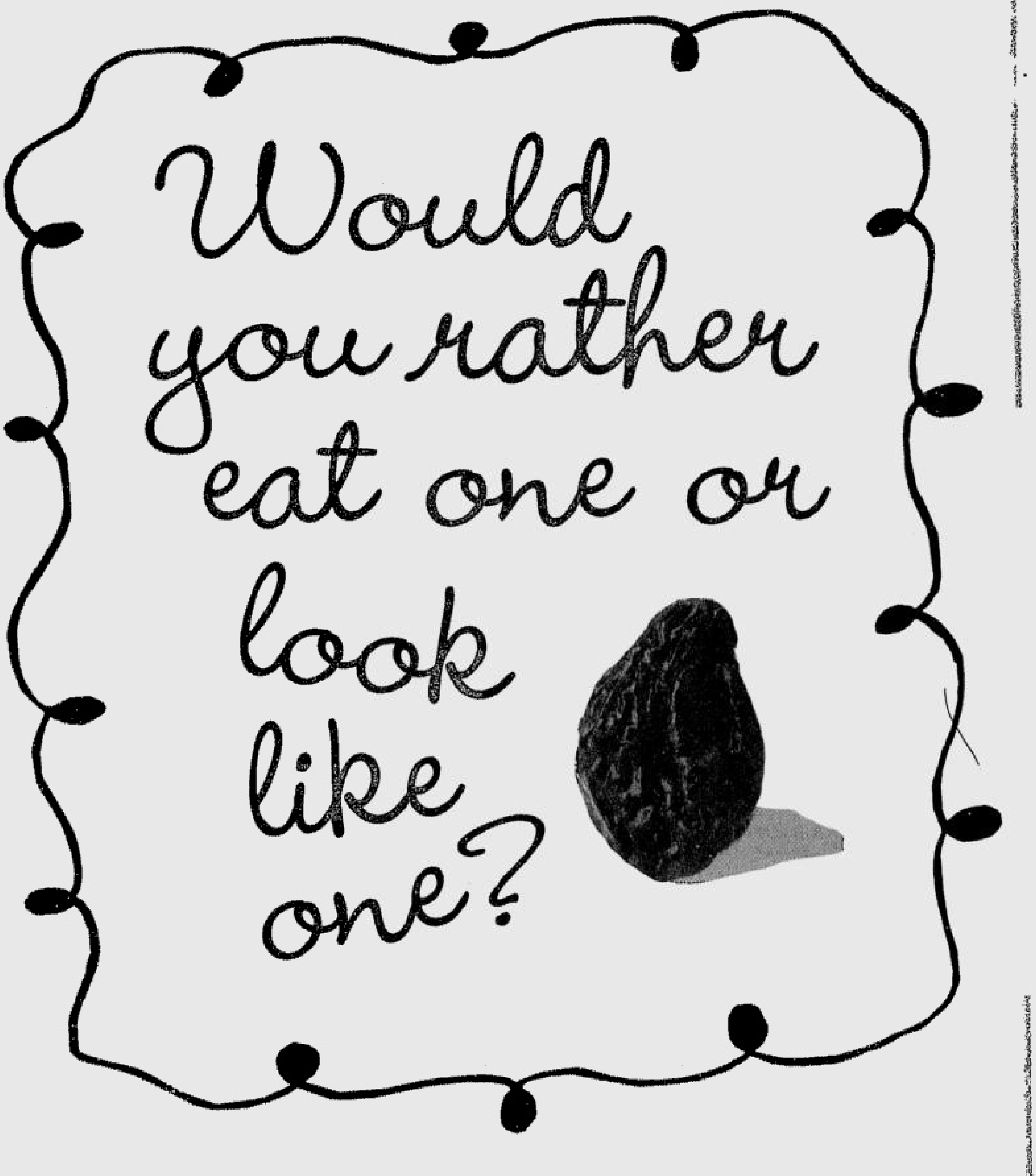
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Meet three fresh, young faces from Talent Center

By Monica S. Gutierrez

LAST week, ABS-CBN Talent Center presented three fresh young faces whom it is molding in the tradition of the "Underage" group, Maricel Soriano, Snooky Serna and Dina Bonnevie.

In their publicity photos, the three lovely faces, Angelene Aguilar, Pia Romero and Bea Alonzo, exuded beauty and confidence and looked every bit the future movie stars that they were supposed to be. But as the three ladies walked into the room to be presented to the press, there was a look of terror in their eyes as they flashed their wide smiles and made their way through the tables where the press people sat, on to the presidential table. They looked every bit the nervous teenagers they really were. But not for long.

BEA Alonzo, Pia Romero and Angelene Aguilar want to join beauty pageants someday.

Impromptu

As the night wore on, and the questions from the press kept coming, the three young ladies started to relax and be comfortable with the writers. Each one even gamely sang impromptu *a capella* numbers to prove (and they kept emphasizing this the whole evening) that they had a lot of talent, aside from their pretty faces. Bea sang "Cry" by Mandy Moore, Angelene sang "Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw" in a very cool, sweet voice, and Pia sang "Without You," and yes, they can all carry a tune.

The people in the room were enamored by the beauty of the three girls. Reporters kept saying that, when they are old enough, they could very well be contenders in our prominent beauty contests. All three girls giggled and revealed that they all aspire to be the country's representatives to the Ms Universe beauty pageant someday. At their young age (Pia is 14, Angelene is 15 and Bea is 16), they are already quite tall, with heights of 5'6" to 5'7", and will definitely be growing taller in the years to come.

Angelene Aguilar could be considered the veteran of the group. She was originally a member of Star Circle Batch 9 and has appeared in the TV shows "Da Body En Da Guard," "Magandang Tanghali Bayan," "Wansapanatym," "Arriba, Arriba!," "Flames" and "Maalaala Mo Kaya." In the recent Star Awards, she was nominated in the category "New Movie Personality of the Year." As the writers tried to pit her against the winner, Heart Evangelista, Angelene immediately answered, "Deserving *naman si* Heart!" and quickly added that Heart has been in the business longer than she has.

Front row seat

Angelene was discovered while she was watching the G-mik Nation tour. "*Sobrang* idol *na* idol *ko sila!*" she gushes. She reveals that she even had a front row seat to the G-mik show. She was asked to join one of the contests onstage, which called for her to act as a model. Well, she won the contest and was given a calling card by David Fabros, which gave her such a thrill. "*Ang tagal ko nang gustong mag-artista!*" she exclaims. The best part for Angelene? "*Sobrang saya ko, nakakatrabaho ko mga* idol *ko!*"

Bea Alonzo was also a member of Star Circle Batch 10. Her real name is Phylbert Angellie Ranollo. Her father is British and her mother is Filipino. Bea was born here in the Philippines. She is graduating from high school this March and plans to pursue a college degree in Mass Communications. She feels the need to have a back-up just in case her show biz career doesn't take off. Interestingly, Bea was discovered in a small-time beauty pageant, Binibining Santolan, where she bagged the third place. Luckily for her, she made such an impact on Archie Ilagan (now her manager), who was in the audience at that time.

Pia Romero is the youngest of the three and the standout of the group. First of all, her features are quite different from the other two, and she is the most candid of the three. As if she really wanted to set herself apart, that night she was in a bright pink outfit while her two friends were in light blue. Pia (that's her real name) was born in Germany; her real family name is Wurtzbach. Pia says that she can still understand German but finds it increasingly difficult to communicate in her father's language. "*Nakakalimutan ko na!*" she laments.

Pia discloses that her greatest fear about joining show biz is that she will not be successful. For the young actress, success means being known and perhaps later on, receiving awards—"Because that will show that I deserve to be an actress," says she. Before joining a show biz career, Pia was a print model for Avon and Her Bench and has appeared on the cover of teen magazines such as Candy and Meg. She says, that although she enjoyed her modeling stint, it left her wanting more. Then she decided that she wanted to be an actress.

Auditions

Pia is not a member of any Star Circle Batch. She tells us that she just heard that ABS-CBN was holding auditions and she tried out and was chosen. She says her parents are very supportive of her dreams.

One thing noticeable about the three new stars was that they are such good girls. It makes you wonder how long this will last, or whether they will last at all in show biz! When asked about who they want to have as a leading man, Pia and Bea very shyly admitted that they want to work with Jericho Rosales. Angelene says that, in the future, she wants to have Aga

MEET/p.D6

'The Eye Care Revolution'

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

"I CARE about eye care." Thus does Dr. Robert Abel Jr. encourage all of us to learn about eye health in his very informative book, "The Eye Care Revolution—Prevent and Reverse Common-Vision Problems." Due to the wealth of practical and relevant facts detailed in his book, I am sharing with you choice excerpts relating to the important subject of general eye health, coping with eyestrain and dealing with headaches. Here is the first part on taking care of our eyesight:

"Our eyes, like the rest of our bodies, want to heal themselves, and we can help them do so. By ensuring that our diet contains the proper nutrients, by protecting our eyes from ultraviolet light, chemicals, smoke and air pollution, and by obtaining proper medical care, we can preserve our eyes—and the vision that's so precious to us—throughout our lifetimes.

Nutrients

"We need to protect our eyes both from within and from without. Consuming adequate amounts of vitamins and nutrients will help support and strength them from within. Protective sunglasses and gentle care will help shield them from external danger. The eye and its surrounding areas, of course, are quite fragile.

"The skin under the eyes is particularly delicate, and shouldn't be rubbed. Inadvertant tugging at the tissue under the eye can result in saggy eyelids as well as bags and wrinkles under your eyes later in life.

"Rubbing your eyes (when they're tired or itch) can induce swelling and breakage of small capillaries on the surface of the eyes, which can also make tears thicker and intensify the burning sensation that often accompanies itching.

"...How we use our eyes is directly related to their health and the vision problems we develop (or avoid). It's long been suspected, for instance, that there is a connection between constant close work and developing myopia, or near-sightedness.

"Researchers at the Primate Research Center of Washington State University tested this suspicion on monkeys whose eyes are very similar to humans.' They restricted the monkeys' vision to 15 inches—that is, the monkeys weren't allowed to look into the distance. These monkeys subsequently developed near-sightedness, a condition that has not been observed in the wild.

Saying

"This may remind you of the saying, 'Use it or lose it.' The monkeys who were not allowed to use their eyes to look farther than 15 inches into the distance lost their ability to see at a distance. If you don't use both your near and far vision, your eyes may weaken, as in the case of our monkey friends.

"People who spend most of their time outdoors—and presumably looking into the distance—experience very little near-sightedness. The vision tests performed on native Alaskans in the 1930s and again in the late 1960s bear this out quite well. In the 1930s, native Alaskans had no near-sightedness. But over the intervening forty years, their lives underwent momentous changes. By the 1970s, 30 percent of Eskimo children—who lived much more of their lives inside than their elders—had become near-sighted. ***(To be concluded)***

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The black minority awakens in Hollywood

By Behn Cervantes

HOLLYWOOD has been handing out the Academy Awards for a good 74 years now. In all these years, the Oscars (Bette Davis allegedly named the golden statuette after her uncle, whose physique resembled the figure) have been handed to only a few black actors.

Minor roles

That they were always a part of the Hollywood scene is a fact, although in the past decades they were relegated to minor roles, usually playing slaves, servants, butlers, natives, cannibals and the like.

Rarely did they ever get major parts to merit nominations and the chance to thank their peers for winning the coveted statuette.

Only 34 nominations were garnered collectively by 26 black actors in the long history of the Academy Awards. It speaks of the political climate, the nature of the scripts and the public's perception of Blacks during this long period.

It took the 1940 epic "Gone With The Wind," a story of the South during the American Civil War, to allow for a developed character to become a significant part of its story: Hattie MacDaniel portrayed a lovable nanny who suffered along with her masters during those turbulent times.

FREEMAN, GOLDBERG, POITIER AND BERRY. Among 26 black actors who have either won or been nominated for the Oscars.

For her performance in that Davild Selznick classic, she was awarded the Best Supporting Actress statuette, the first black talent to ever win the Oscar.

The beloved Ethel Waters was nominated in "Pinky" starring Jeanne Crain for the same statuette in yet another nanny role in 1950.

Not till 1991 did the comedienne Whoopi Goldberg repeat McDaniel's feat. This time, however, Goldberg did not play a nanny but instead was a goofy modern urban woman in "Ghost."

Poetic study

Five years earlier, Whoopi was nominated for the Best Actress category for Steven Spielberg's poetic study of the South, "Color Purple," but didn't win.

The very beautiful Dorothy Dandridge started breaking barriers in the early '50s and got nominated in the Best Actress category for her performance in the 1955 blockbuster, "Carmen Jones." The late café chanteuse co-starred with Harry Belafonte in Otto Preminger's adaptation of Bizet's "Carmen."

The tragic Ms Dandridge became a victim of alcohol and drug abuse soon after she starred in "Porgy and Bess," also a Preminger film. In that film, she co-starred with Sidney Poitier, an actor who quietly set the pace for the trend for black actors in Hollywood. In 1964, the Caribbean Negro won the Best Actor trophy for "Lilies of The Field," a role many black activists felt was still trapped by detested stereotypes. Nevertheless, this major accomplishment broke down more walls and made it easier for younger actors to follow his footsteps.

Change of mind

On the other hand, Cuba Gooding Jr. won the Best Supporting statuette for "Jerry Maguire" in a role that would have been the envy of the black actors who came and suffered before his time. This clearly indicated a change of mind, of values and society's perception of the role of blacks in American society.

Calypso advocate Harry Belafonte, the first Negro Superstar and matinee idol, put a stop to his promising career to join the painful struggle of his people for the enactment of the Civil Rights Law for blacks that culminated in the late '60s.

The collective efforts of the many Negro actors like Lena Horne, Nat King Cole, Satchmo, Sammy Davis Jr., Billie Holiday, Dandridge, and Belafonte gave younger black performers today the opportunities they now enjoy. The pioneers had to enter the service entrance of the establishments they performed in, although they were the stars in the major halls of those hotels and clubs. The discrimination is well documented in their sad autobiographies. Times have changed, indeed.

Feats

The vastly improved opportunities are manifest in the feats of Poitier, Goldberg, Washington and Morgan Freeman who have all garnered more than one Oscar nomination. This indicates the freedom of choice as well as the quality of scripts that are given black actors now. In the past decade, black actors have been consistently nominated for the golden statuette. Quickly coming to mind are the memorable performances of Freeman in "Driving Miss Daisy" and "The Shawshank Redemption" (I think he is the best of the heap), Angela Bassett in "What's Love Got To Do With It?," Denzel in "Hurricane," and Michael Clarke Duncan in "The Green Mile".

This year repeats the feat of the black actors in 1973. I daresay there will be more of the same in years to come because, even as good scripts and opportunities are now made available to black actors, there is also a market of blacks who are film buffs. Hollywood is above all a business, so it can't ignore that profitable and faithful market. Like the white audience, black viewers want to see their people's lives and aspirations depicted on the big screen. About time, too!

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKSHELF

Young's 'Acting Solo' is an absorbing book

BY LEIA TORRE

JORDAN R. Young is a prolific freelance writer whose work has appeared in The Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Christian Science Monitor, and dozens of other publications. He has also written several books concerning the performing arts.

Sections

"Acting Solo: The Art of One-Man Shows" is a very absorbing book dedicated to the one-person show art form. It is divided into several sections, each of which deals with a specific show, story, actor, or tradition.

The book starts off with an introduction by Julie Harris, whose solo theater career was launched when she played Emily Dickinson in director Charles Nelson Reilly's "The Belle of Amherst." In this introduction, she shares with the reader several insights into the fears and rewards that accompany involvement in one-person shows.

The preface describes the book's intent as an expedition into largely uncharted territory." Young did not tire of researching the history of this art form and interviewing many performers who have helped shape the history of the one-person show.

Origins

The prologue details the origins and early history of this branch of theater. Samuel Foote has been credited as the originator of the vogue. He was followed by George Alexander Stevens, who first popularized the monologuist's art with his celebrated "Lecture upon Heads" in 1764, and finally by Charles Matthews, who established himself as *the* comedian of the age with an original form of entertainment, once described as "a whole play in the person of one man."

It is later emphasized that no two shows are alike—the material dictates the style used for a particular show. Then the book provides glimpses into several successful one-person show performers. "The Queen and her Disciples" is about Ruth Draper, the much emulated but unrivaled "queen of one-woman theater," and those actresses on whose careers she had a lot of influence: Cornelia Otis Skinner, Joyce Grenfell, and Lily Tomlin.

Famous personality

"In Person" features shows whose premise is having an actor impersonate a famous personality onstage—Emlyn Williams as Charles Dickens and Philip Baker Hall as Nixon in "Secret Honor," to name a few.

"Will the Real Mark Twain Please Stand Up?" focuses on several stagings undergone by the writer's life and works. Hal Holbrook did the first characterization of Twain in "Mark Twain Tonight!," and he was followed by Ray Reinhardt and Bill McLinn.

What is theater without Shakespeare? "Homage to the Bard" discusses those shows which have had actors like John Gielgud anthologize Shakespeare by taking bits and pieces and characters from the Bard's plays and combining them to form a cohesive whole.

"Monologue: Pat Carrol" chronicles the career of Pat Carrol, and her portrayal of Gertrude Stein. For his part, Ray Stricklyn is known for his portrayal of famed playwright Tennessee Williams.

Project

"Emily, Charlotte, Zelda, and Lillian" deals with female protagonists. The scripts of the plays featuring these four women were written by one man, William Luce, who was a virtual non-entity before Julie Harris and

YOUNG'S/p.D6

PAN PIZZA
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Rene Russo toughs it out with De Niro, Murphy

RUSSO. Self-critical streak.

By Arthur Spiegelman

LOS ANGELES—Meet Rene Russo for the first time and the tall, willowy actress famed for taming the toughest guys in town might make you an offer you can't refuse.

Action heroes

It is 4 p.m. on a hot, hazy Beverly Hills afternoon and Russo, who has been the screen squeeze of such Tinseltown action heroes as Clint Eastwood, Pierce "007" Brosnan, John Travolta and Mel Gibson, needs a nap. She's been chatting all day with journalists about her new film, "Showtime," in which she co-stars with yet another pair of box office hitmen, Robert De Niro and Eddie Murphy.

But in walks another journalist, all set to ask "Hi, what's it like to work with De Niro and Murphy?

So she announces she is sleepy. He yawns and says he could use a nap as well. She then declares with a giggle, "Good, let's sleep together." (The journalist even had his lead written: "Sorry boss, no story, I was sleeping with Rene Russo.")

But, it is all illusion.

Chemistry

Russo gets an unseen wake-up call and is off and verbally running, declaring, "No nap. I feel giddy . . . I just loved making 'Showtime.' I loved the chemistry between De Niro and Murphy. Eddie is alive and so facile and so good at improvising while De Niro is so dry and he can get such looks. As an actor you realize that what he does is so hard to do."

She then repeats a line from the movie that De Niro did a dozen different ways, each rendering more intense than the last, before deciding on one to use when the cameras began to roll.

"I often wonder why they don't give Oscars for comedy because it is so much harder to do. Eddie knows comedy inside and out, that's something I don't know, while De Niro is so honest."

Russo plays amoral television producer Chase Renzi, who blackmails honest cop Mitch Preston (De Niro) into doing a police "reality" show where he has to partner with a grandstanding showoff, Trey Sellars (Murphy), whom he hates and also learn how to walk and talk in front of a camera.

So one of the country's leading actors has to act like he can't act and as far as Russo is concerned acting like you can't act when you can act is hard acting. (If that isn't clear, maybe everybody did need a nap.)

On the television show, Murphy's posturing looks like the real thing while the fed-up-with-phonies De Niro looks like a sea-slug until, of course, the bad guys show up and he gets animated. Among the funnier scenes in the film are William Shatner's efforts to show De Niro how to act like a real TV cop just the way he did when he played T.J. Hooker in a far away and long ago television galaxy now available only in reruns.

Grouch

The film tries to act like a live-action "Shrek" with Murphy repeating in the wiseguy jackass role and De Niro as the grouch (ogre). Although Russo gets to give De Niro a quick kiss, this is a police buddy film in which the top cops begin by hating each other.

Russo says that whether you believe it or not, Murphy and De Niro are very similar people. "They are both unbelievably quiet guys. They don't like to talk on the set and they are both amazing fathers. De Niro went back home to New York every weekend to see his kids."

A former top fashion model who ventured into acting at age 32 and still wins top roles 16 years later, Russo has come to specialize in playing the love interest in films that don't have a whole lot to do with love like "Lethal Weapon 3" and "Lethal Weapon 4."

She insists that her leading men are all different even if the genre treads familiar ground. "De Niro and Eastwood both have powerful energy but are very contained. Mel is wild. He is high energy. Mel is all over the place."

Best kisser

As for who is the best kisser, Russo lets out a squeal of protest. "Wait a minute, I didn't kiss them all," she says. Then she pauses to reflect. "That Mel is a pretty good kisser. De Niro doesn't count. We just have a smack at the end."

Russo is known in the business for a self-critical streak so when asked which of her films she liked most, she can't answer.

"I haven't seen my movies, I don't like watching myself. I go to the premiere and then leave . . . But I can't complain I know I'm blessed. What I'd like to do is a wonderful romantic comedy where it is me and this guy equally. But I don't see getting that, those are roles for Julia Roberts and Meg Ryan. I'm realistic but it is a shame. I think I can kick ass."

With that the interview ends and Russo bids farewell to the reporter. "Sorry we didn't get to sleep together," she says. ***Reuters***

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Meet three fresh, young faces from Talent Center

From page D4

Muhlach as her leading man.

All three teenagers say they don't have a boyfriend and seem to shudder at the thought of having one (maybe because their mothers were listening). Bea comments, "I don't think I need one." Angelene says, "*Sobrang* young *pa ako!*" Pia, the youngest, reacts, "Awkward! *Sobrang* young *pa ako!*" Like Angelene, she wants to focus on her studies first. "*Para pag sumikat ako at nalaos*, I can still work, maybe even in other countries!"

Their innocence and idealism are most evident in their answers to the question about how they can be role models for the youth. Bea says, "I will share my talent. *Imbis na magbisyo (ang kabataan), mag*-focus *na lang sila sa* talent *nila*." Angelene answers, "*Ang kabataan ngayon, nagso*-smoke, *umiinom. Ipapakita ko*, never *ako magso*-smoke *at gigimik! Sa bahay lang ako!*" The members of the press reacted incredulously. For Pia, she says, "In anything you do, try your best. Don't have a relationship at such a young age. *Nakakasira iyon!*"

In the temptation-laden world of show business, it will be quite hard for the three girls to live up to their promises. Hopefully these three fresh, young faces will stay as idealistic and wholesome as they are now, and they will be able to surpass the hurdles and reap the rewards that show biz has to offer.

Young's . . .

From page D5

Charles Nelson Reilly teamed up with him to do Emily Dickinson's story in "The Belle of Amherst." This project was followed by "Currer Bell, Esq.," a one-woman play about the life of Charlotte Bronte. Luce's third one-woman play was entitled "Zelda" and was about F. Scott Fitzgerald's schizophrenic wife, and his fourth was based on the memoirs of controversial writer Lillian Hellman.

"Life as Art" also features the latest trend in one-person shows, the autobiographical monologue. The actor-writer who started this trend was Quentin Crisp. This form found acceptance with the influence of Spalding Gray, whose first monologue was "Sex and Death to the Age of 14."

Cris Villonco comes into her own as a young-adult performer

By Nestor U. Torre

A COUPLE of weeks ago, we watched the Filipino musical "Alikabok" at Music Museum, and were impressed with the performance of Cris Villonco as the show's female lead character, Bising.

Disheartened

But we were disheartened to hear that Cris had decided to give up her performing career here in favor of studies abroad and a new career as an educator.

We're all for people wanting to become teachers, but we rued the fact that the promising musical-theater talent was ending her career in show biz and the performing arts, especially when she had just come up with her best performance to date in "Alikabok."

It would have been much better if she had decided to combine her two interests, performing and teaching, instead of giving up one in favor of the other. After all, other people had been able to combine these two admittedly disparate worlds, and Cris could, too.

As for studying abroad, that was OK, too, but not really all that essential, since we already have good teachers and courses here.

Positive reaction

In any case, our thoughts in this regard were moot and academic—or so we thought. A week later, however, we heard that the audience's positive reaction to her performance in "Alikabok" had made Cris change her mind about her plan to stop performing and to study in the States.

If this is true, this is wonderful news. Because Cris has it in her to become a major musical-theater talent *and* pop singer whose performances can brighten the local entertainment and theater scene.

Fledgling career

We've been following her fledgling career for years and see in her a young Sharon Cuneta—well-born but accessible to the masses, a giving singer-actress and hard worker. Even better, she's fallen in love with the theater and can use her increasing popularity to interest more people in patronizing local musical-theater productions.

We remember that, last year, we talked to somebody close to Cris and wondered why she was apparently being left behind by her young contemporaries like KC Concepcion, Diane dela Fuente and Carol Banawa. We urged Cris' mentors to think up good showcases for her, to project her in a more dynamic way to the public.

Good start

Her performance in "Alikabok" is a good start, but if she does indeed decide to stay here, it should be followed up with other attention-calling projects this year. Talent is fine, but it must be promoted and showcased for it to come to its full flowering.

There' a good chance of that happening because Cris appears to be not just pretty and talented, but a "giving and sharing" performer as well. Audiences sense this generosity and positive attitude and thus find it easy to relate and empathize with her, despite her not being "*masa*."

Laurels

Even better, Cris doesn't rest on her laurels. Unlike some former child stars who are loath to grow up, she proved with her young-adult performance in "Alikabok" (complete with kissing scenes) that she's ready—and even eager—to act her age and to keep growing as an artist.

And, best of all, she's a versatile performer who can have flourishing separate careers as singer, actress and, combining her many talents, as an all-around performer. Yes, she should definitely stay here and work on furthering her career. The States can wait!

VILLONCO. In love with theater.

Five questions for Lil' Bow Wow

By Liz Sidoti

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Going into his ninth year in the entertainment business, pint-sized rap star Lil' Bow Wow is branching out—more music, movies and even a clothing line.

Heady stuff for someone who turned 15 on March 9.

Two albums

Since being discovered at age six, the five-foot protégé of rapper-actor Snoop Dogg has set the stage for other young rappers. His teen-age fans have pushed his two albums, "Beware of Dog" and "Doggy Bag," to platinum status.

His story is old hat in hip-hop circles. In 1993 while on the Chronic Tour, Snoop pulled the boy—who was born Shad Moss—up onstage during a show, picking him out of the crowd by chance. An impressed Snoop then invited him backstage, bestowed on him the name Lil' Bow Wow, got him signed on as an opening act for the rest of the tour, and made him guest rapper on the "Doggystyle" album.

It's been nonstop ever since for Lil' Bow Wow, whose hometown is the blue-collar Columbus suburb of Reynoldsburg.

Bow, as everyone calls him, has spent the past few years touring and performing with the likes of Madonna at awards shows and benefits.

Magic sneakers

Now, he's starring in the movie "Like Mike." It's the story of a boy whose magic sneakers let him fly on the basketball court like Michael Jordan. His co-stars are a slew of NBA stars, including Jordan, Karl Malone and Kevin Garnett.

"I'm having a lot of fun filming the movie. It's cool," Bow said by telephone from Los Angeles during a brief break between filming and tutoring sessions.

"Like Mike" is expected to be released this summer, the same time Bow's new line of children's clothing, Lil' Bow Wear, will be in stores. Q and A:

What else is there left to do in show business that you haven't already done?

I have no idea. But, I could see having a Bow Wow figure or something. (Laughing.)

Do you ever wish for a different childhood?

Sometimes, yes . . . The only thing I'm really missing (is) going to school and getting a chance to play basketball every day and hanging out with my friends. I only go back home every now and then.

You have said that you've always wanted to be a professional basketball player. You recently played in the NBA All-Star Jam, and now you've played with Michael Jordan and others for the film. How did a little guy like you hang with the pros?

I did pretty well. I had a lot of things going on at that time, so I was a little distracted.

NBA fan

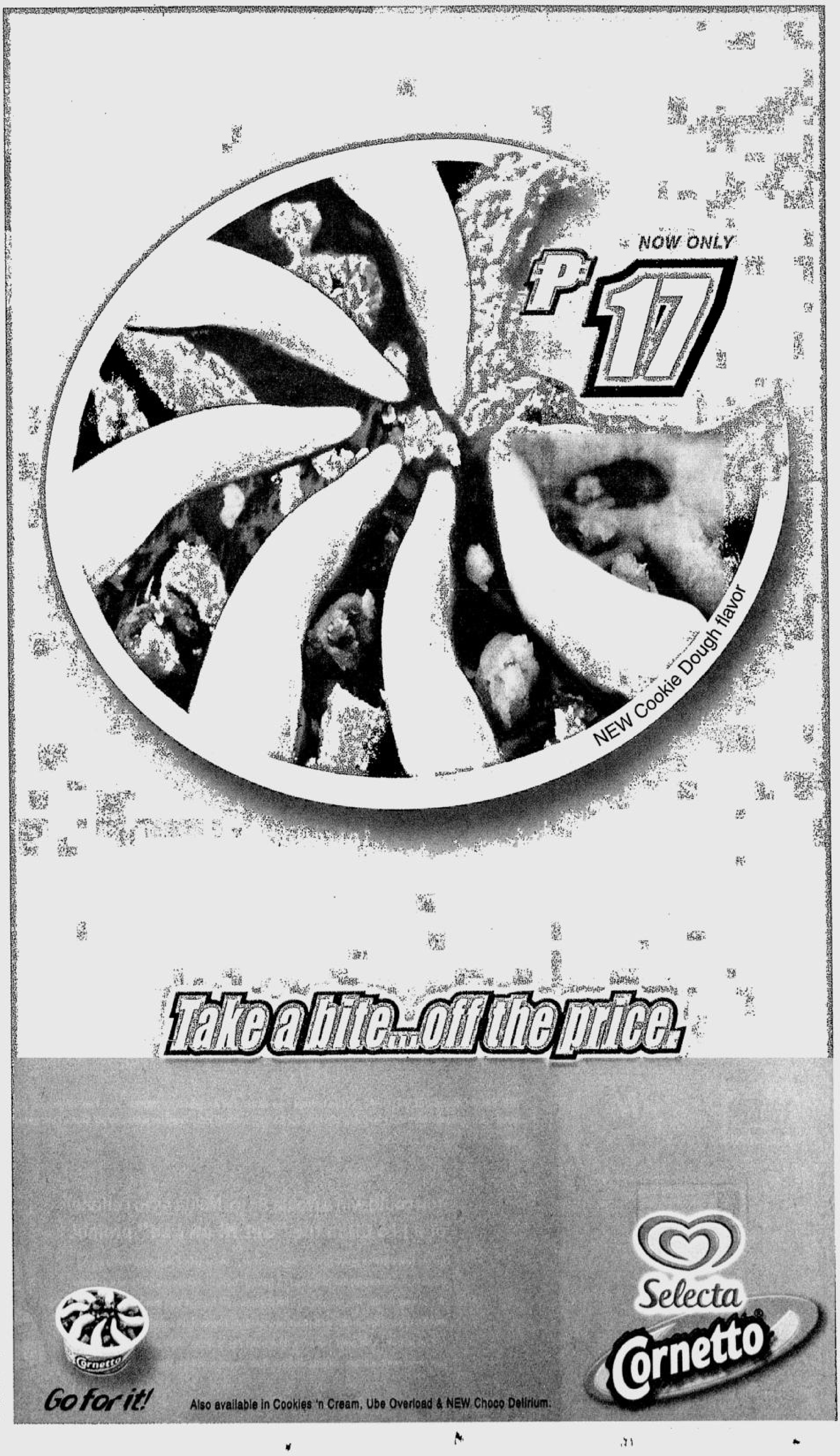
But it was cool, you know, I've been an NBA fan ever since I was born, so being out there with everyone is great.

Who would win in a showdown on the microphone, you or Lil' Romeo?

I started it. I was the first. I really opened up the gate and the next thing you know, another 'little' comes and another 'little' comes, and another 'little' comes, and it's not stopping. It makes me feel good. I'm at the point where I don't care what everyone else is doing.

Who's the coolest person you've met and how did you meet?

Michael Jordan, Allen Iverson and all the basketball stars. No, wait. It's got to be Michael Jackson. Oh, no, Michael Jackson's mom. Yeah, she's probably the coolest. She invited me to the house to play with her grandkids one time because they were bored or something, so I went down to the house and hung out. And she said I could go back whenever I wanted. So, yeah, she's probably the coolest person. *AP*



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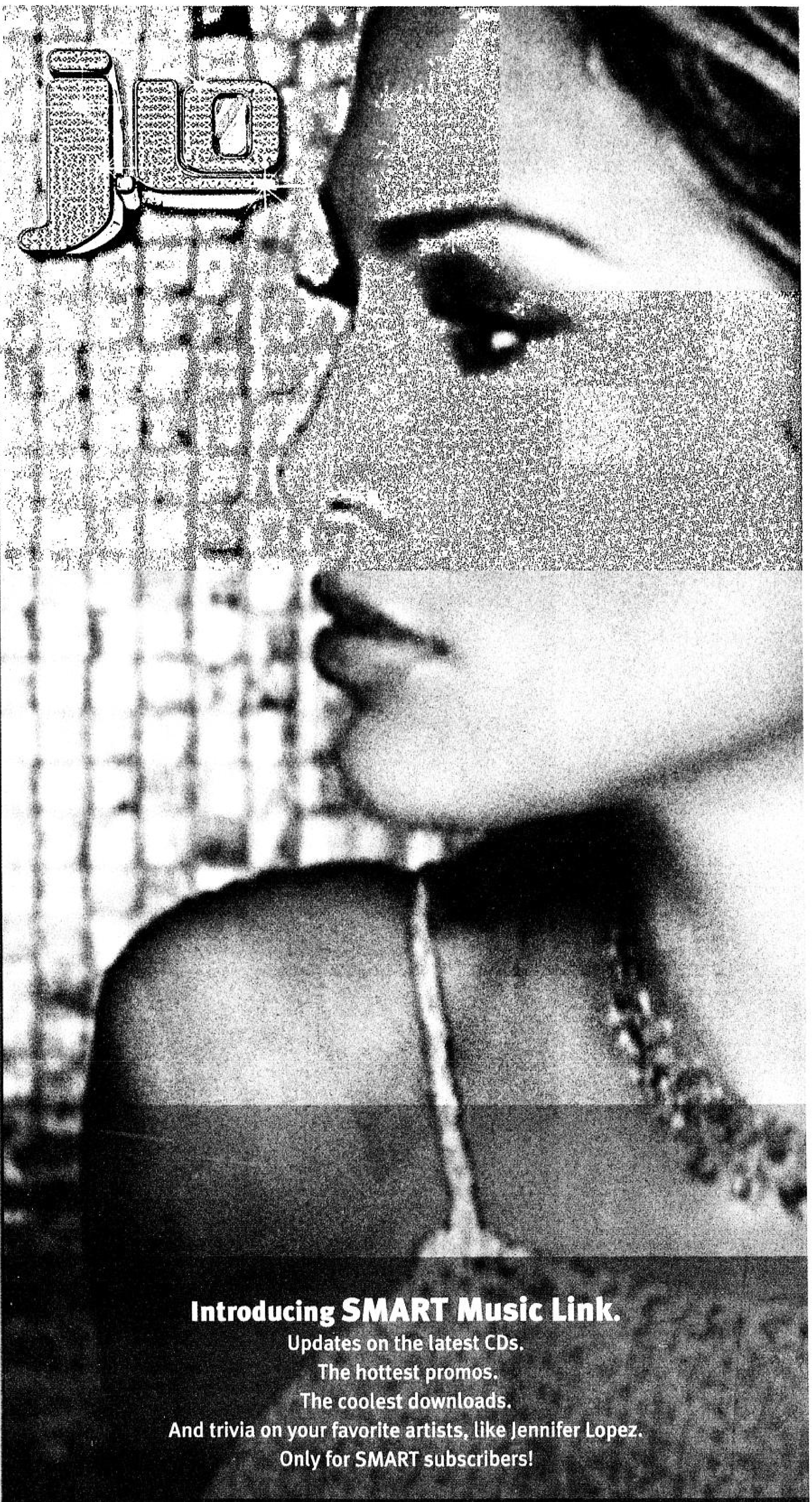

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DENVER. The musical shows the singer "warts and all."

'ALMOST HEAVEN'

Revisiting the music of John Denver

By Robert Weller

DENVER—When a show about John Denver was first pitched to Donovan Marley, artistic director of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, he wasn't interested.

"I said that will be a whole bunch of ballads—how boring," Marley recalled recently in an interview.

Mountains

The fact that many of Denver's songs—particularly "Rocky Mountain High"—came to symbolize the mountains that serve as a backdrop to Colorado's largest city wasn't enough to get his attention.

Marley's award-winning theater was known for taking chances on shows such as the epic-like "Tantalus" or "The Laramie Project," about the murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard in Wyoming.

Yet after listening to a demo CD of the show, Marley realized the arrangements by Jeff Waxman were nothing short of brilliant. They comment on each other ironically, Marley said.

Now, the world premiere of "Almost Heaven: Songs and Stories of John Denver" began preview performances March 21 at the center's Stage Theater. It opens March 28 and runs through April 27. Depending on how well the show is received, it will have a national tour.

Universal appeal

Theatergoers will be surprised, says Hal Thau, Denver's longtime friend and manager. Instead of the sugar-flavored image of Denver at which critics scoffed, the musical shows the singer "warts and all," according to Thau, and demonstrates the universal appeal of the man who wrote "Thank God I'm a Country Boy," "Sunshine on My Shoulders" and "Take Me Home, Country Roads."

"John wasn't a Pollyanna," Thau said. "He sang about his feelings and his hurt. The intelligentsia didn't like him. They would listen to him when they were in their car and no one knew."

A television movie, "Take Me Home: The John Denver Story," that Thau co-produced two years ago was popular. It starred Chad Lowe.

"'Almost Heaven' will be a thousand times better," he predicted. Thau had wanted to do a show about Denver's music similar to "Jacques Brel Is Alive and Living in Paris" while Denver was alive. But the timing wasn't right for the singer-songwriter. After Denver's death in the October 1997 crash of his experimental plane, Thau began working on the show again.

"I didn't think I was going to find anyone to play John Denver. And how do I find the right vehicle?" Thau said. "Then someone calls and says there is a show based on Woody Guthrie's life. It knocked me out." Thau, who has worked with artists ranging from Duke Ellington to Neil Young, enlisted Waxman and Peter Glazer, the creators of "Woody Guthrie's American Song" to bring "Almost Heaven" to life.

"In some cases, we go a long way to reinvent the songs," Waxman said. "By intention, Peter and I wanted to appeal both to big fans and those who may have felt it was not their cup of tea."

Six actors

The 90-minute show features six actors—three women and three men—backed by a seven-member orchestra. At times, each actor will play Denver as he speaks about love, war and peace, the environment, the creative process and being on the road.

Denver's decision to drop his family name, Deutschendorf, to take the name of the biggest city in his adopted Rocky Mountains also is discussed. **AP**

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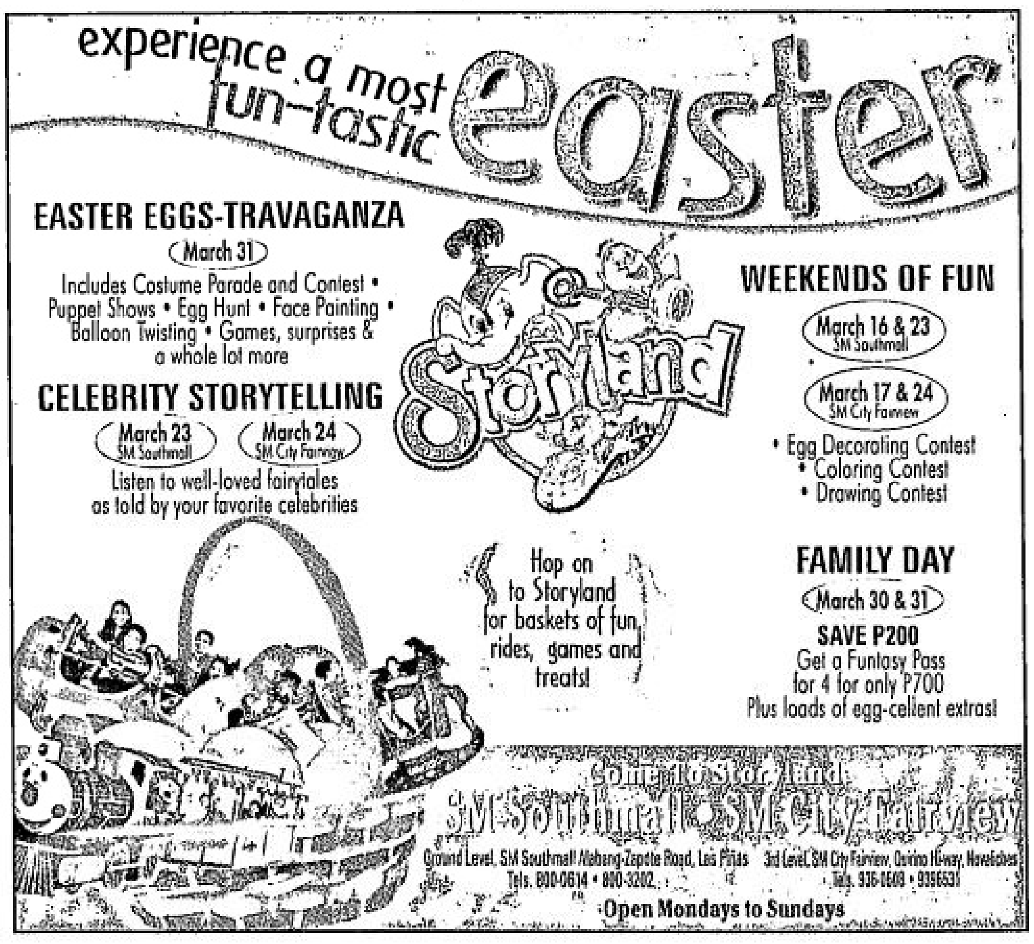

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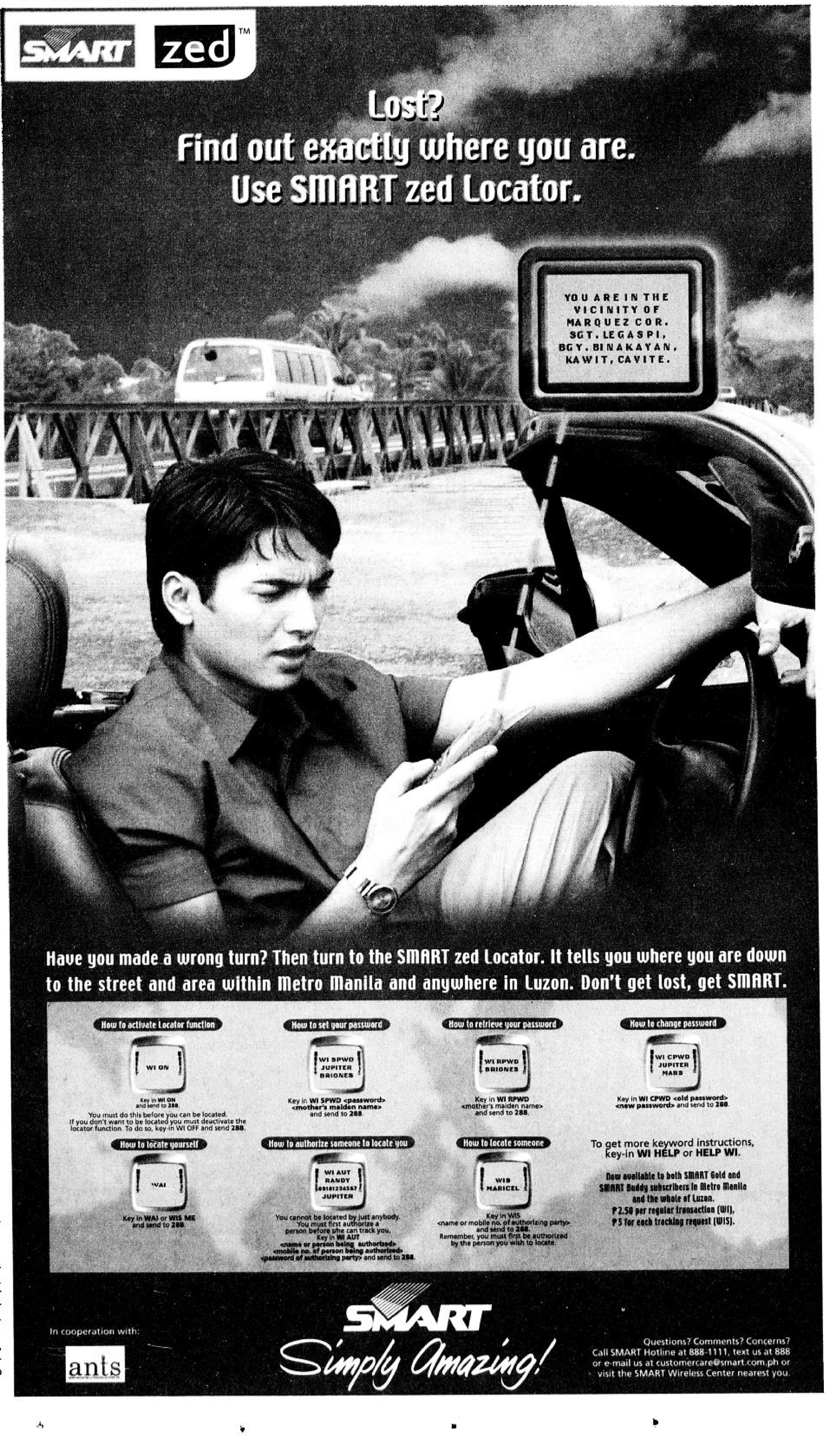

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10 MTV and Penshoppe Youth Council members for 2002 named

AFTER a three-month long campaign, MTV and Penshoppe recently announced the 10 members who will comprise the MTV and Penshoppe Youth Council. The announcement was made at Rockwell Center recently.

The Magic 10 are: Male division—Marco Lobregat, Uriah Vanden Bos, Richard Lozano, Brad Turvey and Terrence Ko; Female division—Kelly Misa, Danielle Mendoza, Kathleen Hilario, Nicole Schulze, and Leila Lee Kuzma.

Unique

The MTV and Penshoppe Youth Council Search, which is presented by Cali and I-Academy, is unique because it's a search for image models *and* ambassadors of goodwill.

Says Rod Nepomuceno, marketing and communications director of MTV, "Being in the Council is not all glamour and prestige. We constantly remind the Council members that their being selected is not a right but a privilege, and, to a certain extent, a responsibility. They will be busy doing a lot of socio-civic activities such as visiting orphanages and homes for the aged."

MTV Penshoppe Youth Council members (back row) Marco Lobregat, Richard Lozano, Terrence Koa, Brad Turvey, Uriah Vanden Bos; (front) Leila Lee Kuzma, Kathleen Hilario, Danielle Mendoza, Nicole Schulze and Kelly Misa.

Modeling contract

The MTV and Penshoppe Youth Council members each won a modeling contract from Penshoppe for the rest of the year and, if qualified, will also host MTV events. Moreover, for two lucky members of the Council who are interested in taking up information technology as a career, I-Academy will provide two scholarships.

Tita Muñoz brings authentic style and class to 'Sana, Ikaw na Nga'

By Nestor U. Torre

ONE of the nicest things that have happened on the show biz scene this year is the TV comeback of the acclaimed actress, Tita Muñoz, who is now one of the mainstays of the popular soap, "Sana Ikaw na Nga."

Tita is cast as the mother of Eric Quizon in GMA-7's weeknight tearjerker, to which she brings some much-needed style and class--of the authentic kind.

Loud and livid

All too often on TV soaps, *doña* roles are assigned to actresses who don't have the right background, so they resort to superficially baroque, loud and livid acting styles that make the rich look and sound like gargoyles.

With Tita Muñoz, you get real style, temperament and verve, for the simple reason that she is used to moving around in stylish social circles. So, when she is cast as a rich matriarch, she doesn't have to put on an act, and knows exactly where her character is really coming from.

I'm a fan of Tita Muñoz because I was fortunate enough to catch her best TV-film-stage performances when she was at her prime. Even better, I was able to act with her in some memorable stage productions, thanks to National Artist Rolando Tinio, who directed us in a number of his plays decades ago.

Prizewinning plays

Most memorable to me was Rolando's staging of two of his Palanca prizewinning one-act plays, "Claudia and Her Mother" and "It's April, What Are We Doing Here?" The two plays were very different from each other, but Rolando wanted the same three actors (Tita and I performed with another top stage actress-and opera singer—Mitos Sison) to appear in both plays.

MUÑOZ. In her element as a rich matriarch in the TV soap.

Thus, the production was a big challenge to us—especially to me, since I was fairly new to theater acting, and yet Rolando had "dared" to cast me opposite two of the most gifted and experienced stage actresses in the land.

Opera singer

I learned a lot from acting with Tita and Mitos. Since she was an opera singer, Mitos had a grand performing style that was excitingly larger than life.

From Tita, I got valuable pointers on insightful character analysis, subtlety *and* intensity of performance; style as opposed to artifice; and thespic truth.

A great beauty whom people then compared to Elizabeth Taylor, Tita also had an excellently textured and expressive speaking voice that she used to wonderful advantage.

Wild swings

In another production, "Suddenly, Last Summer," Tita played the female lead character whom Elizabeth Taylor portrayed in the film version of Tennessee Williams' famous play, while I was cast as the German psychiatrist who had to contend with her wild swings of mood and emotion.

Tita turned in a memorable performance that was different from Taylor's in terms of "attack," but match it on point of insight and intensity. After that production, I was Tita's fan for life.

Another unforgettable experience I had when working with Tita and Rolando happened during rehearsals, not performances. We would often rehearse in Tita's chic apartment in San Juan, and Rolando was so completely taken with Tita in those days that he wrote a poem of praise for each and every part of her apartment!

Poetic conceit

Rolando's poetic conceit was that he "envied" those parts of Tita's abode because they had her all to themselves 24 hours a day, while he could be with her for only a few hours at a time.

Thus, he wrote separate poems to Tita's window, front door, living room, bedroom, etc! Even better, each poem was framed and posted at the particular part of the house that the poem "celebrated" for its intimate association with the fabulous Tita. They were wonderful poems, too.

Now you know why Tita is so dear and special to us. And why we're so happy to see her acting again, after much too long an absence onstage, and on TV-movie screens.

TWO FOR THE SHOW

Regine Velasquez for Crossover

By Mary Ann A. Bautista and Ricky T. Gallardo

LAST March 14 Regine Velasquez performed at the Captain's Bar at Mandarin Oriental. For some strange reason, the audience reacted only when Regine sang in falsetto. They failed to appreciate her mellow songs. When she sang "At Seventeen," "A Lone Lonely Afternoon and "Man On My Mind," the audience reaction was lukewarm.

And her spiels were bad. She only connected with her audience during the latter part of the show when she sang "Come On In Out of the Rain," "Love Is Stronger Far Than We," "Til They Take My Heart Away" and "To Reach You." She got thunderous applause with "Run To You" and "Never Too Far Away." Her voice is good but she doesn't have the commanding presence of Lea Salonga or Martin Nievera.

Ronald Navarro releases new album

Ronald Navarro is no stranger to the music scene. He was a former gospel singer with the Papuri group back in the '80s and a former choir member of the Pentecostal church. Now he's venturing into the pop scene. He believes that being a former choir member is an asset, not a liability.

"Music is universal. My songs center on love. The message is usually the same," he says.

CHICANE. Didn't disappoint the 6,000 screaming fans who caught his show.

He believes that a hit song should be simple and have recall. "It should reflect the times. It should be emotional. Songs which center on love and pain click with the masses," he observes.

He sings with a band called ROB, and this has helped him to stretch his range. "I connect with my audience. We do R and B covers," he shares. His advice for aspiring singers? Never stop dreaming.

Chicane lives up to his name

Chicane Live started at 1:30 a.m. last March 16 but over 6,000 people were still screaming their heads off with excitement.

Chicane (also known as Nick Bracegirdle) did not disappoint the crowd.

With a vocalist and a six-piece live band complete with drums, keyboards, guitar and saxophone, he gave the crowd a good show. Opening with a new track, he slowly built up the tempo, playing the hits, "Saltwater," "Halcyon" and "Don't Give Up."

The euphoria was so intense that people were clamoring for more even after the show had ended. Chicane promised the crowd that he'd be back in Manila.

Dubious choices

We wrote last weekend that quality would be the main gauge for the selection of the Manila Film Festival entries this year. Well, that was according to Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Atienza's office received 43 letters of intent of participation from the producers with attached scripts for review by the screening committee.

But a few days ago, we received news that the committee members had already made their choices (whew! how can you read 43 scripts in so short a time?). The list reads: Maverick Films' "Diskarte," Star Cinema's "Jologs," Regal's "Sweethearts," Viva's "Magkapatid," Neo's "Super B Saves the Day," and RVQ's "Yes, Babe, That's My Daddy."

These are the big producers of Philippine cinema and most of the above films are commercially-oriented. We've been hearing complaints from distinguished directors and scriptwriters about the failure of their dream movies to be included, and we think they have reason to feel that way.

REGINE/ P. E3

Deo Fajardo directs Robin again after seven years

By Edmund L. Sicam

DIREK Deo Fajardo and action star Robin Padilla go back a long way. In fact, Deo was the one who discovered Robin when he was just a gangly teenager. The action director tells us that he also discovered Rudy Fernandez, Robin's cousin. "Very familiar *ang pangalan ko sa* clan *nila, kaya kung sino man ang gusto magkaroon ng* break *bilang artista, ako ang hinahanap*," Deo recalls.

Holy Week concert

Robin's brother, Royet, is one of Deo's best friends. Royet had long been telling Deo to get Robin as one of his stars. One Holy Week, Deo directed a concert which topbilled singers Basil Valdez and Joey Albert. It so happened that Robin's mother, Eva Cariño, was the producer of that show. "*Nakita ko sa* Robin *doon. Kasi sabi sa akin ni* Royet, *'Eto yung sinasabi ko sa iyo na kapatid ko na ang hilig-hilig mag-artista!*" So Deo told Robin to see him once his vacation started. "After one week, *nasa bahay siya, dala-dala maleta niya! Tinawagan ko ang* mother *niya, sabi niya, 'Sige, bahala ka na diyan!*"

So Robin and Deo treat each other like family. In fact, Deo says he doesn't trouble himself with any titles when it comes to Robin. He says that what is important is that their relationship is there. From this relationship have sprung seven movies and numerous telesines.

Favorite director

Deo is an absolute favorite of Robin when it comes to directing. So, Robin chose Deo to direct his latest movie, "Hari ng Selda: Anak ni Baby Ama 2" where his leading lady is Angelika de la Cruz.

Deo informs us that this movie has been in the works for quite sometime. "*Maski na nandoon pa siya sa loob* (*ng* Muntinlupa), *ito'ng pinag-uusapan naming dalawa.*" Actually, Robin and Deo have not made a movie together in the past seven years. Why is that? "*Noong lumabas siya* (*sa* Muntinlupa), *ako ang sinabihan ni* Vic del Rosario *at* Mommy Rose Flaminiano *na mag*-direct *ng* first movie *niya. Para sa akin*, unfair *para kay* Robin *at lalong* unfair *para sa akin, kasi baka sabihin ng iba, 'Oy, napasok tsaka lumabas, ikaw na naman ulit.' Sabi ko, huwag muna ako. Mas maganda kung bigyan natin ng* chance *iyung iba.* Second movie, *saka na ako gagawa*," explains the director. Robin's next projects did not excite Deo, so he worked on other projects. "*Gusto ko* something *na* very memorable, like this movie," he says.

For some time, Robin worked on light comedy-romances which hardly had any action scenes, a far departure from Robin's "bad boy" image. Deo says he approves of this. "OK *sa akin iyon, para ma*-prove *niya na* versatile *siya, puede siya kahit saan. At parte rin naman ng* program *namin para sa kanya, na medyo iwasan ang* bad boy roles. *Doon muna siya sa mga ganoon*, and then *unti-unti ibalik uli siya sa dati, na gustong-gusto naman talaga ng* fans *niya.*"

And now, he is back with a vengeance. The bad boy of Philippine cinema is back with a movie that he helped conceptualize. Not only did he lend his prison experiences to the story, Robin also acted as one of the assistant directors with Deo as the overall director. As assistant director, Robin was in charge of the action scenes. Deo describes how daring Robin is when it comes to stunts. "*Di siya nadadala. Talagang* by nature *ata mahilig siya sa mga* death-defying acts . . . *gusto niya talaga iyon! Ako pa ang nakikiusap na puede ba, tigilan mo na iyan, at baka mamaya . . .*"

Deo confirmed that they were able to shoot the jail scenes inside the Muntinlupa compound itself since they were able to get permission from Justice Secretary Hernando Perez. He says that he felt no apprehension at all about being in the midst of "hardened criminals."

Actual prisoners

And they used actual prisoners as extras in the movies. Robin insisted that each one be paid, even if the camera merely panned across a prisoner's face. "*Kasi ang ayaw na ayaw niyan, yung magco*-complain *sa kanya na hindi siya binayaran. Magagalit iyan sa* production. *Siya ang magbabayad*," Deo relates.

What amazes Deo most is that Robin feels right at home in Muntinlupa and keeps going back to visit what one would think would be a traumatic place for him. "*Lagi niyang gustong bumalik*, in the sense *na gusto niyang bigyan ng* example (*yung mga* inmates) *na*, if I can do it, you can do it too. *Bumabalik siya hindi para magyabang kundi para binibigyan sila ng inspirasyon.*"

DEO and Robin in the early '90s.

Regine . . . .

From page E2

Academy awards

Whoever believes that the Film Academy of the Philippines awards are the local version of the Oscars must be gullible.

Just look at the list of nominations that came out recently, and the organization's portfolio of past winners. Among local award-giving bodies, we reckon that the FAP is one of least credible in terms of selection of winners because it's susceptible to too much politicking.

Crossing over to the Oscars, it's becoming clearer that it will be a three-way fight for the hotly contested best actress plum, with Sissy Spacek looming as the sentimental favorite, Nicole Kidman as the underdog and Screen Actors Guild big winner Halle Berry as the darkhorse.

We saw "Ali" and "A Beautiful Mind" last week and reckon that Russell Crowe will beat Will Smith hands-down for the Best Actor award. As John Nash, Crowe was splendid and we are placing our bet on him for the second year in a row.

Rafael Rosell makes waves

Mestizo model-turned-actor Rafael Rosell IV believes that patience is a virtue. After years of waiting for his time to shine, Rosell is seemingly on a roll as far as good breaks are concerned.

Recently, his first movie lead role opposite Jolina Magdangal got favorable reviews, despite the fact that his Tagalog still needs a lot of polishing. The movie was also a surprise hit. Now, he's inked a big-bucks deal with Blue Soda fashion apparel to be its latest image model.

We were invited to Rosell's launch in a special fashion show at the Hotel Intercon last week and saw how much confidence he has gained.

We asked Rosell about his views regarding the proliferation (and monopoly) of mestizos in the entertainment business and he said, "I've heard from a lot of people that here in the Philippines, being white and fair and tall and 'imported' will give you the edge. It's all a matter of choice, I guess."

Ariel Rivera's greatest hits

They say that a truly successful singer is one who has released his greatest hits compilation album. That's true, and the newest recruit to this elite category is Ariel Rivera who has not only gathered 14 certified hits in his latest CD but also has a bonus VCD for two of these tracks.

Even if Rivera's popularity has dwindled in recent years and his last major concert was far from being a hit, the fact remains that the singer has survived this highly competitive music industry where many so-called one-hit wonders have exited faster than their grand entrances.

Now happily married to TV host Gelli de Belen, and the father of two boys, Rivera still continues to sing on the Sunday noontime show "ASAP."

FREE magicare inside
ARIEL
POWERWASH SYSTEM
For handwash and machinewash
1kg
SARILING TINDAHAN PARA SA SUKI NG ARIEL

ARIEL
TULONG SA PAGSULONG
Livelihood Program

A LIVELIHOOD PROGRAM of ARIEL with Senator LOREN LEGARDA

Tutulungan ka ng Ariel na magkaroon ng sariling hanapbuhay. Ikuwento mo ang iyong pangarap, maglakip ng 6 na Ariel sachets at maging isa sa mga kababaihang pagkakalooban ng Ariel at ni Sen. Loren Legarda ng sariling tindahan. Dahil hangad ng Ariel ang pag-asenso ng Pilipina.

Mechanics:

1. Ariel will be giving women the opportunity to have their own sari-sari stores. Ariel's support will include the physical structure of the store, signage and initial inventory of products worth ₱20,000.
2. With every purchase of Ariel, there is a corresponding contribution to a livelihood fund that gives sari-sari stores to women. A minimum of 80 stores will be given away. The more contribution to the fund, the more stores will be put up.
3. To participate in the promo, simply fill out the application form below. You must fill-out all information completely, including where you intend to put up the store and answer the essay question. You have the option to write the essay on a separate paper if more space is required. Attach 6 empty Ariel sachets or 1 empty Ariel bag, place in an envelope and drop in dropboxes in major supermarkets and public markets nationwide or mail to: 515 Katarungan St., Mandaluyong City.
4. Applications will be accepted from January 15, 2002 to May 15, 2002.
5. Every month, Ariel will be screening applicants based on the following criteria:
    - Female, ages 21-40
    - At least high school graduate
    - Should have space to put sari-sari store

    Names of applicants who pass the initial screening will be raffled off. 60 finalists will be picked and will be interviewed by an Ariel panel. Finalists will be notified of interview schedule and other requirements via telegram. Applicants who pass the interview will be raffled off to select 20 winners. Winners will be notified via telegram.
6. A minimum of twenty (20) winners will be awarded each month from February 2002 to May 2002 and will be notified via telegraph. Final awarding of stores is subject to ocular inspection to confirm feasibility of putting up the store.
7. Raffle draws will be held in the Procter & Gamble office, 18th flr. 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati, in the presence of a DTI representative on the following dates:
    February 22, 2002
    March 22, 2002
    April 26, 2002
    May 24, 2002
8. Prior to construction of the sari-sari store, winner should present notification telegram, identification and sign a Memorandum of Agreement for the ownership, maintenance and upkeep of the store for at least 12 months.
9. Employees of Procter & Gamble, Ace Saatchi and Saatchi, and Promo Dimensions, Inc. up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity and affinity are disqualified from joining this program.

A. INFORMATION

COMPLETE NAME (PANGALAN)

ADDRESS (TIRAHAN)

PHOTO

CIVIL STATUS ☐ SINGLE ☐ MARRIED ☐ SEPARATED ☐ WIDOWED

DATE OF BIRTH

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND ☐ Grade School ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Vocational

OCCUPATION (TRABAHO)

HUSBAND'S OCCUPATION (TRABAHO NG ASAWA)

COMBINED MONTHLY INCOME (PINAGSAMANG KITA KADA BUWAN) ☐ BELOW 4,000 ☐ 4,001 - 8,000 ☐ 8,001 - 12,000 ☐ ABOVE 12,000

WHERE DO YOU INTEND TO PUT UP THE SARI-SARI STORE? (SAAN NINYO BALAK IPATAYO ANG SARI-SARI STORE?)

B. QUESTION

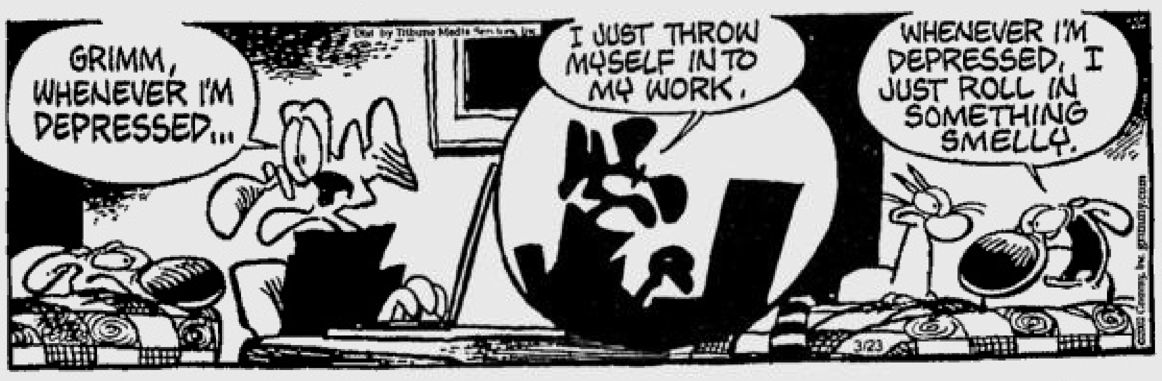
WHAT IS YOUR DREAM IN LIFE? HOW CAN ARIEL HELP ACHIEVE YOUR DREAM?
(ANO ANG PANGARAP NINYO? PAANO MAKAKATULONG ANG ARIEL PARA MAABOT NINYO ANG INYONG MGA PANGARAP?)

* Ang application form ay pwede i-xerox at ihulog sa dropbox.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0001, Series of 2002

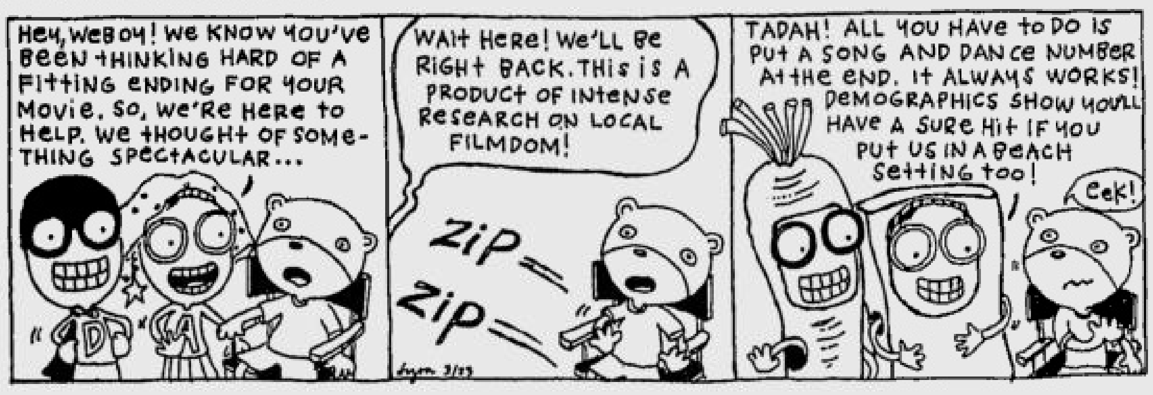
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


GRIMM, WHENEVER I'M DEPRESSED...
I JUST THROW MYSELF INTO MY WORK.
WHENEVER I'M DEPRESSED, I JUST ROLL IN SOMETHING SMELLY.
3/23

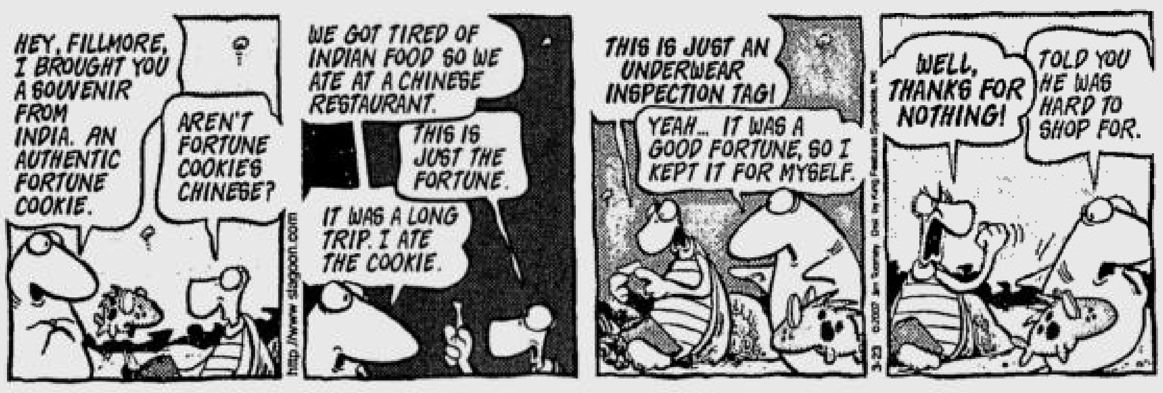
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Weboy! We know you've been thinking hard of a fitting ending for your movie. So, we're here to help. We thought of something spectacular...
D
A
Wait here! We'll be right back. This is a product of intense research on local filmdom!
Zip
Zip
Tadah! All you have to do is put a song and dance number at the end. It always works! Demographics show you'll have a sure hit if you put us in a beach setting too!
Eek!
3/23

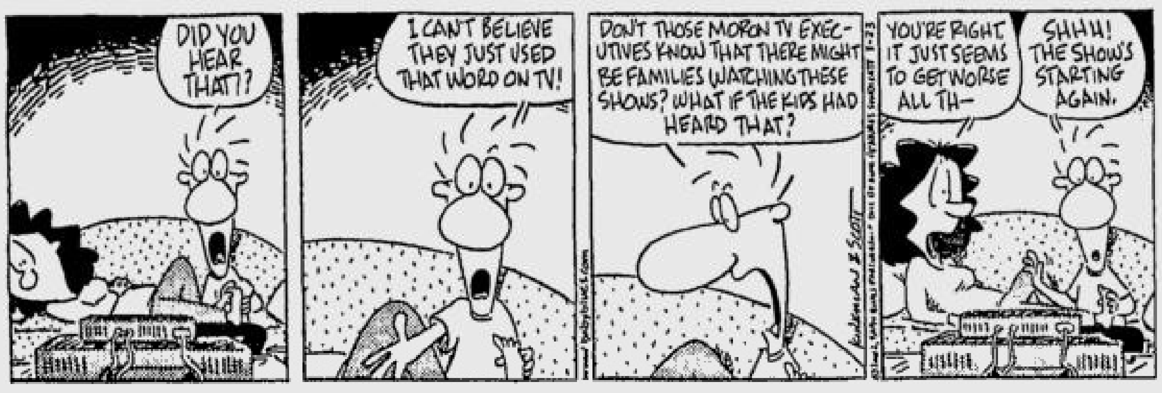
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HEY, FILLMORE, I BROUGHT YOU A SOUVENIR FROM INDIA. AN AUTHENTIC FORTUNE COOKIE.
?
AREN'T FORTUNE COOKIES CHINESE?
WE GOT TIRED OF INDIAN FOOD SO WE ATE AT A CHINESE RESTAURANT.
THIS IS JUST THE FORTUNE.
IT WAS A LONG TRIP. I ATE THE COOKIE.
THIS IS JUST AN UNDERWEAR INSPECTION TAG!
YEAH... IT WAS A GOOD FORTUNE, SO I KEPT IT FOR MYSELF.
WELL, THANKS FOR NOTHING!
TOLD YOU HE WAS HARD TO SHOP FOR.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DID YOU HEAR THAT?
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY JUST USED THAT WORD ON TV!
DON'T THOSE MORON TV EXECUTIVES KNOW THAT THERE MIGHT BE FAMILIES WATCHING THESE SHOWS? WHAT IF THE KIDS HAD HEARD THAT?
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT JUST SEEMS TO GET WORSE ALL TH—
SHHH! THE SHOW'S STARTING AGAIN.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Joan Crawford, Moses Malone, Amanda Plummer, Keri Russell

Happy Birthday: This can be a year to remember. Put yourself on the line and don't hesitate to take on whatever is necessary in order to fulfill your dreams. You can make things happen if you are determined, aggressive and have a no-nonsense attitude. Your numbers are 7, 12, 26, 33, 41, 47

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Necessary changes at home may not be welcome but in the end could turn out to be quite favorable. Nothing will be as bad as it appears. Take things in stride .

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will have plenty of opportunities to get out and do things with close friends or relatives. The more you can fit into your busy schedule the better. Idle time will be your enemy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Concentrate on making your life better. Take the time to reevaluate your past and look into your future. Ask yourself what it is that you want to accomplish.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will be a little moody but that's half the battle when you're a Crab. It's not your fault that you are sensitive and emotional and take things to heart.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't do things that you may regret later on. You will be tempted by secret intrigues that might not be in your best interest. Your reputation may be affected if you aren't careful.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can offer a tremendous amount to an organization that you feel strongly about. Don't sit back; stand up and contribute all that you can to make things better.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You may have to play it safe today. If you make promises to loved ones make sure that you can deliver. The disappointment will not be forgotten soon.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Idle time will drive you to distraction. You need to be where the action is or, better still, you make the arrangements so that you are sure to get the stimulation and rush that you are looking for.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Overindulgence will lead to trouble. It is best to take it easy today. Unusual financial ventures may be offered to you but if you don't do your research well you may pay too much.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Expect emotions to run deep and trouble to find its way to you. The people you have to deal with today will want to do things differently from you. Back away and do your own thing.

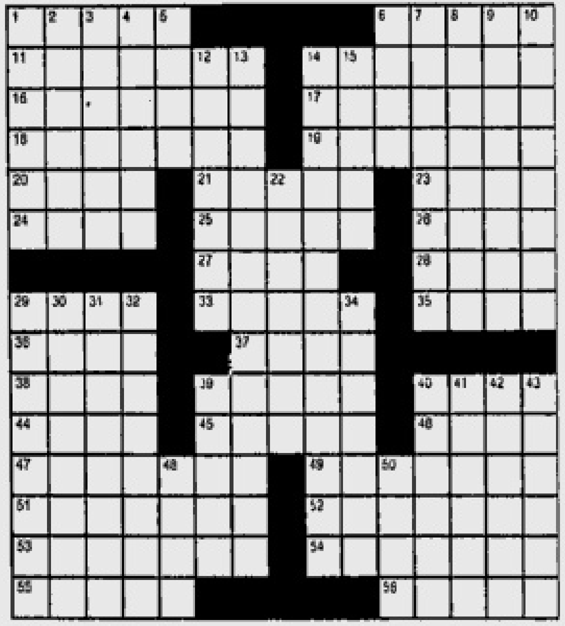
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Get involved in a new health regime today that is sure to get you back on track. Get involved in something invigorating that will get your heart pumping and your blood flowing.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't sit around waiting for the phone to ring. Make all the arrangements yourself. Love, romance and socializing should be your intent. Lots can happen under the moonlight.

Birthday Baby: You will be sympathetic and compassionate. You have mystical insight and intuition. These qualities allow you to tune in to the thoughts and feelings of those around you. You need to have an outlet for your creativity.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Norman Wizer
Malvern, PA

3/23/02

ACROSS

1 Draws back, as from fear
6 Seaport in Brittany
11 Cockatoos and macaws
14 Part of a fugue finale
16 Surround completely
17 Pulverizer
18 Utterly stupid
19 Even more squalid
20 Las Vegas game
21 Assign to the junk heap
23 Name of a diamond
24 Offed
25 List components
26 Completely obvious
27 Charles who wrote as Elia
28 Delicate shower
29 Cathedral service
33 Vituperate
35 Grub
36 Against
37 Carbamide
38 Clarified fat
39 Like a forest full of clearings
40 Bath and Ems
44 Out of the wind
45 Surgeon's cutter
46 Balderdash!
47 Property merchant
49 Biggest ape
51 Iniquitous
52 Even more dippy
53 Agreeableness
54 Fused, as ores
55 One of Florida's keys
56 Oozes

DOWN

1 Gives one's address?
2 Gretel's brother
3 California city southeast of Santa Ana
4 Once upon a time
5 Arias for individuals
6 Very dry, as champagne
7 "Cocoon" setting
8 Contemporary Abyssinia
9 Most precipitous
10 Heavy, uncontrolled outpourings
12 Throat guardians
13 With an impressive display
14 Broken breakfast?
15 Pitfalls
22 Suckers on sharks
29 Relating to swamp fever
30 Figure-eight scale on a globe
31 Decorative ribbon
32 Obliquely
34 Barracks' leisure space
39 Lord it over
40 Smother
41 Mannerly
42 Out for the night
43 Pottery fragments
48 The Magi, e.g.
50 Small Eurasian deer

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	N	D	■	R	A	G	U	■	C	A	R	A	T
I	G	O	R	■	E	L	A	M	■	A	L	O	N	E
N	E	R	O	■	T	I	M	B	E	R	L	I	N	E
K	R	A	M	E	R	■	S	E	G	O	■	L	A	M
■	■	■	E	R	I	N	■	R	A	M	P	■	■	■
D	A	Y	D	R	E	A	M	■	L	E	A	N	E	D
I	D	E	A	■	V	I	A	L	■	D	R	O	N	E
A	D	A	R	■	E	L	L	A	S	■	I	N	T	L
N	O	S	I	R	■	S	T	I	C	■	S	C	O	T
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■	■	■	S	M	E	W	■	E	L	O	I	■	■	■
O	L	E	■	O	N	E	S	■	P	R	O	F	I	T
T	A	B	E	R	N	A	C	L	E	■	N	O	R	I
I	N	A	N	E	■	V	A	I	L	■	E	R	A	T
C	A	N	E	D	■	E	R	I	S	■	R	E	N	O

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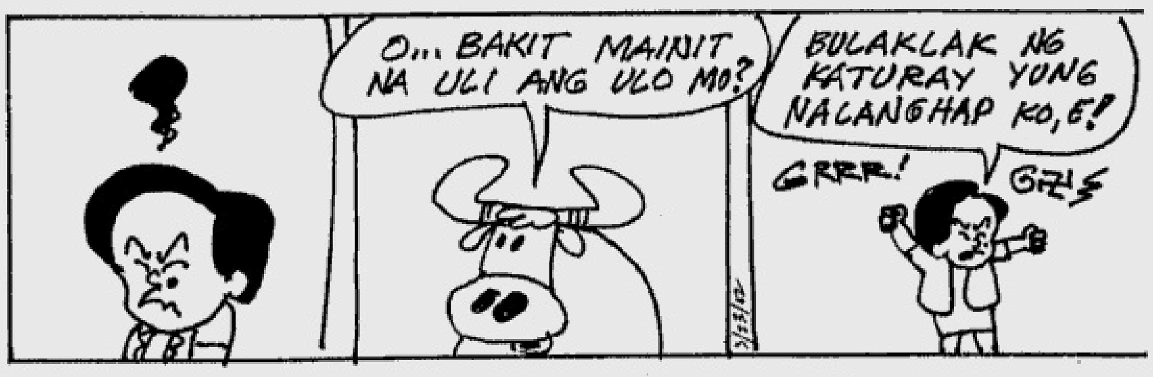
3/23/02

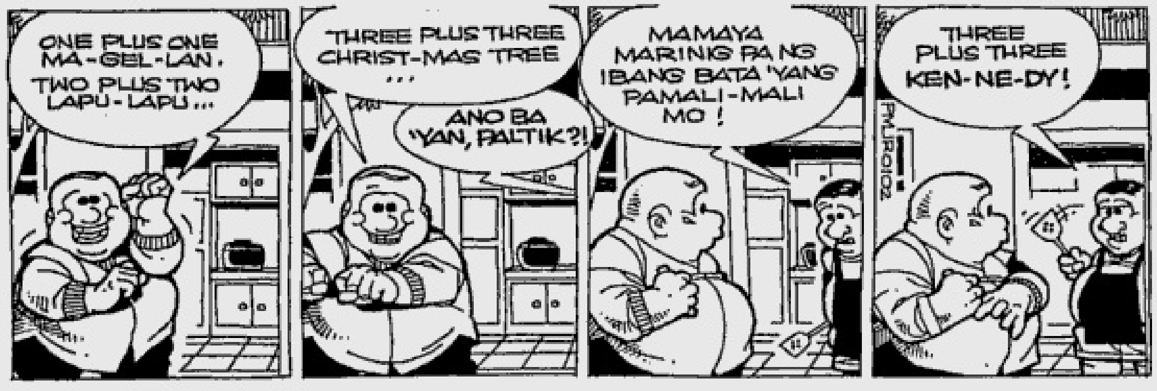
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


O... BAKIT MAINIT NA ULI ANG ULO MO?
BULAKLAK NG KATURAY YUNG NALANGHAP KO, E!
GRRR!
GRR!

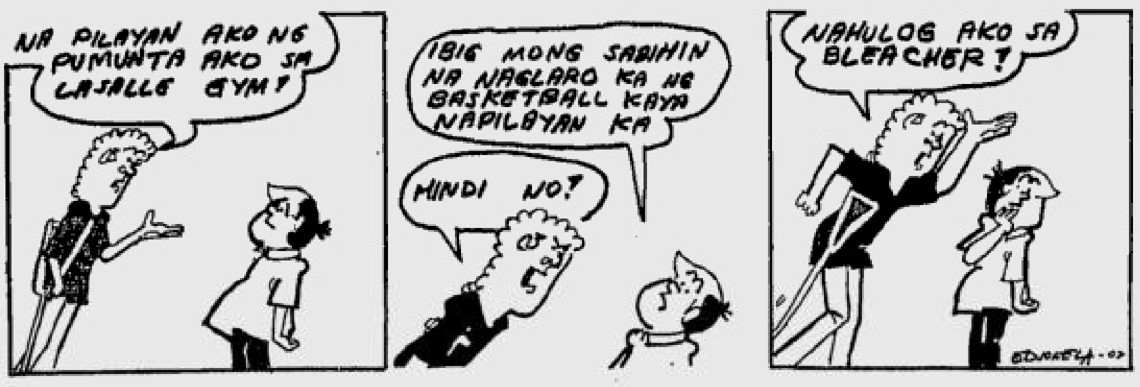
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ONE PLUS ONE MA-GEL-LAN. TWO PLUS TWO LAPU-LAPU...
THREE PLUS THREE CHRIST-MAS TREE ...
ANO BA 'YAN, PALTIK?!
MAMAYA MARINIG PA NG IBANG BATA 'YANG PAMALI-MALI MO!
THREE PLUS THREE KEN-NE-DY!
P.M.JR.02

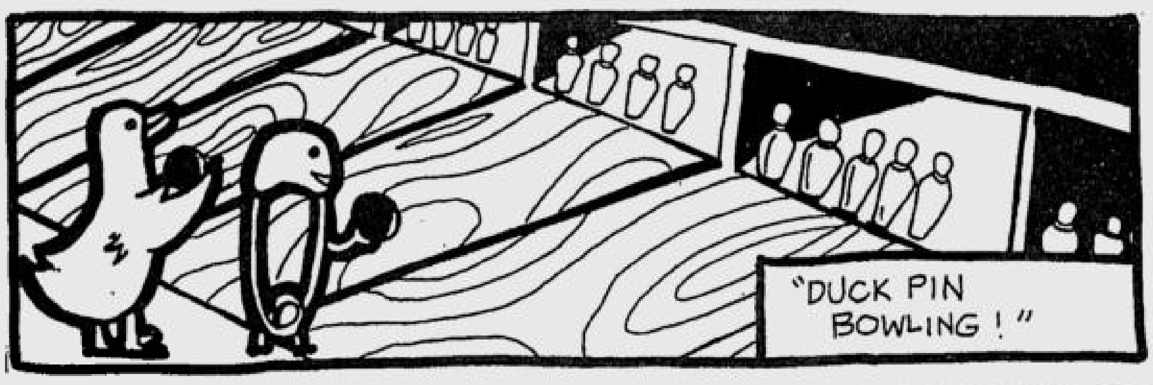
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NA PILAYAN AKO NG PUMUNTA AKO SA LASALLE GYM!
IBIG MONG SABIHIN NA NAGLARO KA NG BASKETBALL KAYA NAPILAYAN KA
HINDI NO!
NAHULOG AKO SA BLEACHER!
EDIONELA-02

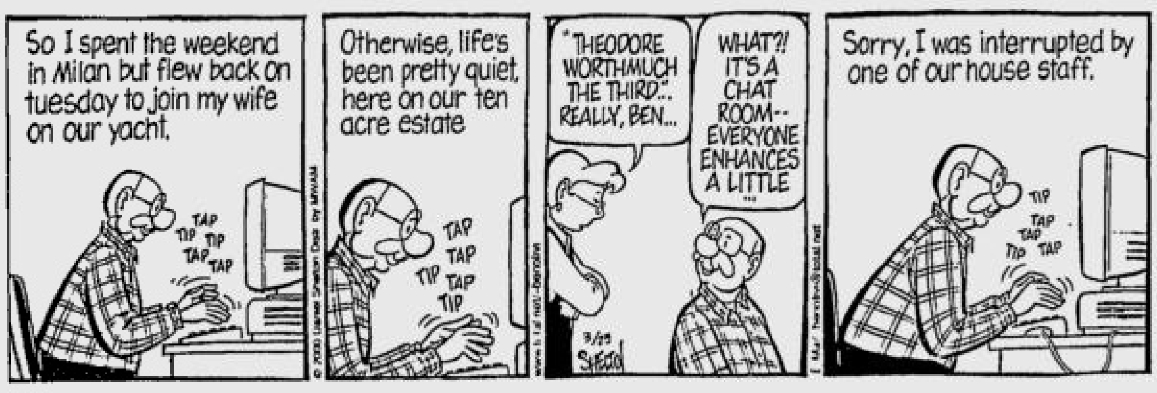
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


"DUCK PIN BOWLING!"

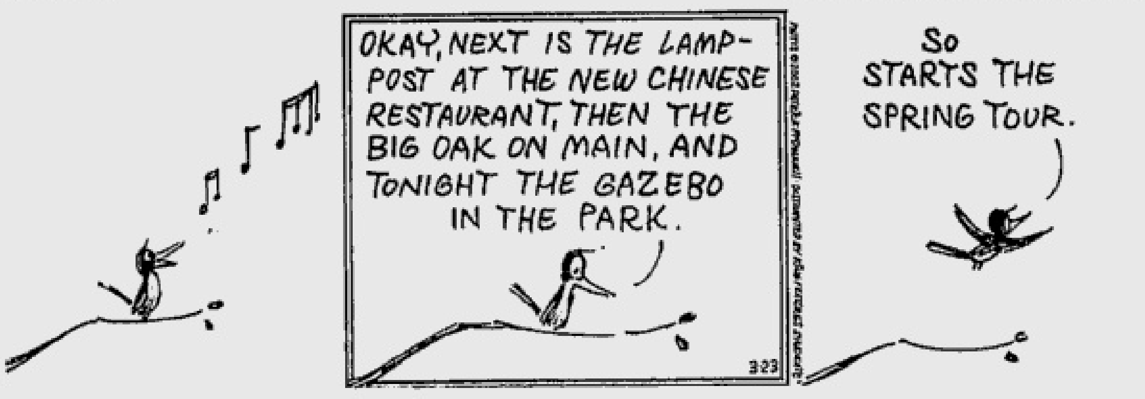
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


So I spent the weekend in Milan but flew back on tuesday to join my wife on our yacht.
TIP TAP TIP TAP TAP
Otherwise, life's been pretty quiet, here on our ten acre estate
TAP TAP TIP TAP TIP
"THEODORE WORTHMUCH THE THIRD"... REALLY, BEN...
WHAT?! IT'S A CHAT ROOM-- EVERYONE ENHANCES A LITTLE ...
Sorry, I was interrupted by one of our house staff.
TIP TAP TAP TIP TAP

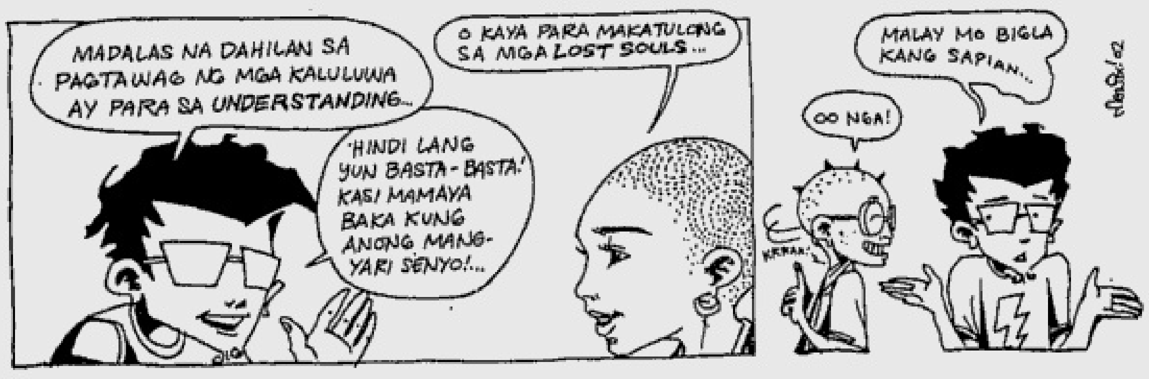
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OKAY, NEXT IS THE LAMP-POST AT THE NEW CHINESE RESTAURANT, THEN THE BIG OAK ON MAIN, AND TONIGHT THE GAZEBO IN THE PARK.
So STARTS THE SPRING TOUR.
3-23

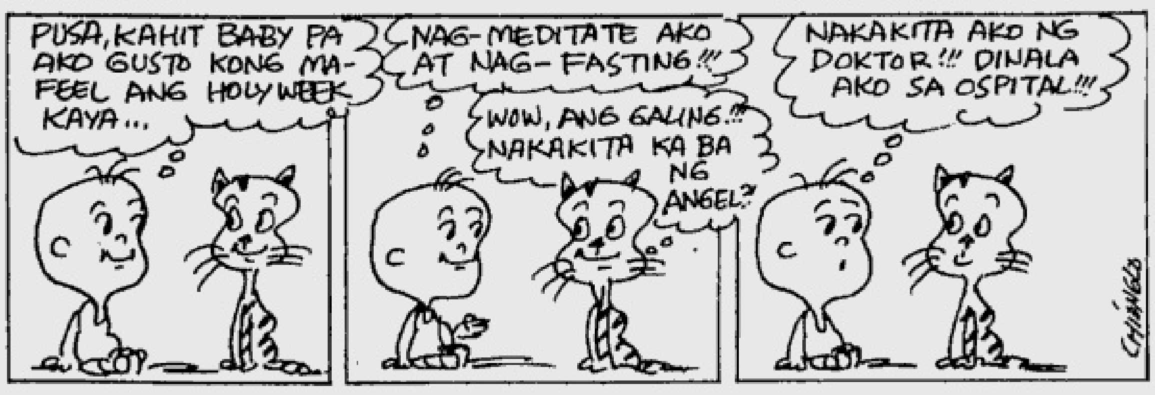
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MADALAS NA DAHILAN SA PAGTAWAG NG MGA KALULUWA AY PARA SA UNDERSTANDING...
O KAYA PARA MAKATULONG SA MGA LOST SOULS...
'HINDI LANG YUN BASTA-BASTA!' KASI MAMAYA BAKA KUNG ANONG MANGYARI SENYO!...
OO NGA!
MALAY MO BIGLA KANG SAPIAN...
KRRAA!

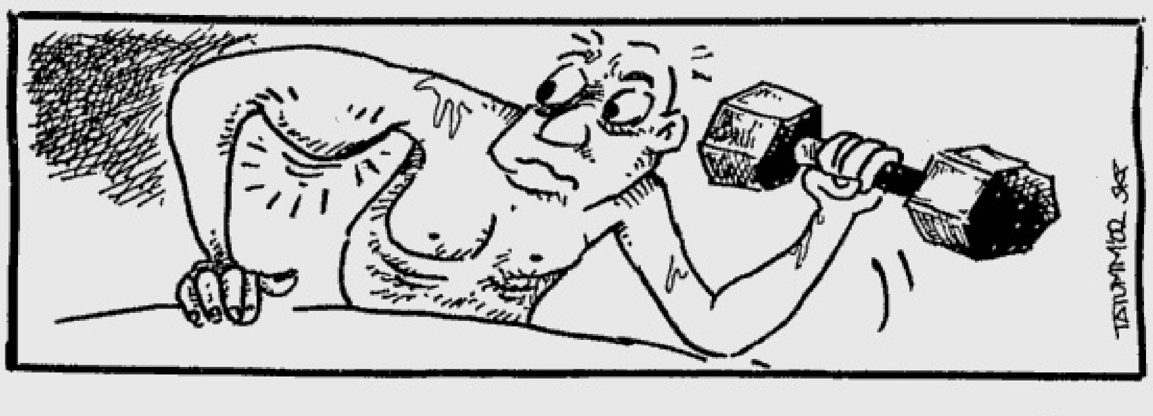
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUSA, KAHIT BABY PA AKO GUSTO KONG MA-FEEL ANG HOLY WEEK KAYA...
NAG-MEDITATE AKO AT NAG-FASTING!!!
WOW, ANG GALING!!! NAKAKITA KA BA NG ANGEL?
NAKAKITA AKO NG DOKTOR!!! DINALA AKO SA OSPITAL!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Zsa Zsa Padilla takes a break from show biz

By Edmund L. Sicam

(Conclusion)

WITH her US trip, Zsa Zsa is hitting three birds with one stone. Aside from getting the rest she needs, she is also going to see a specialist in Las Vegas. The singer last went to a doctor here in Manila last December. "They all say the same thing: 'Zsa Zsa, just rest.' They don't say don't talk for one month, they just say rest," she reports. But Zsa Zsa says that her fellow singers have recommended to her that she stop talking unless it is completely necessary.

Sometimes, especially if she has a show to prepare for, she follows this practice. But other times, it is virtually impossible to do. Zsa Zsa shares that in their household, when somebody knocks on her bedroom door, people will not enter unless she shouts, "*Tuloy*!" So sometimes, she puts Post-its on her door which say "Zsa Zsa No Talk Today!"

Bonding with Kaye

Another objective she has for this trip is to have some bonding time with her eldest daughter, Kaye (Karylle). "It's just the perfect time for us to bond together because she's graduating on the 23rd," Zsa Zsa says. They are leaving at the end of the month and plan to stay abroad for only a month. The singer discloses, "I don't know *lang* how long I can last *kasi*, whenever I'm away from family, I'm always crying!" The actual length of her vacation will be determined by what the doctor in the US tells her. But she is looking forward to spending time with her daughter.

"I owe it to Kaye. It's been a long time *na*." The last time they went to the US, Kaye was only seven years old. Although Kaye has been to Europe with her father, mother and daughter have not been on a trip in a very long time.

PADILLA. Her Mandarin Oriental concert is now on VCD.

In the meantime, she has been busy with the release of her double-disc VCD, "In My Life . . . Zsa Zsa Padilla," a live recording of her concert at the Mandarin Oriental Manila. The two VCDs practically cover the whole concert, although some numbers were reshuffled. However, it frustrates Zsa Zsa no end that she has some signature songs which she is not allowed to sing because of copyright infringement, etc.

Frustration

"The biggest frustration is, of course, the fact that the VCD is titled "In My Life," with songs that have affected your life and best describe what you've gone through, but minus your signature songs! It's frustrating for an artist!" she says in exasperation. Zsa Zsa cannot record her early hits such as "Hiram" because the copyright is being held by another recording company and Zsa Zsa is under contract with Viva Records.

She may be leaving us for a while, but in her absence, Zsa Zsa's fans have her VCDs to tide them over while their idol rests and gets her voice back.

SIDE A AND FREESTYLE REPEAT TONIGHT

Catch the final performance of the first ever joint concert by Side A and Freestyle in "Back2back: Side A and Freestyle, the Repeat" today at 8:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum together with Hotlegs and the Manouevres.

Elton John laments bands' focus on instant success

LONDON—"Rocket Man" Elton John rued on Wednesday the thrust for instant success among undistinguished and indistinguishable modern pre-fabricated pop bands.

Mediocre

"It is like packets of cereal. There are too many of them., and too many of them are just average and mediocre," he told BBC television in an interview filmed during his current tour in the United States.

"It is just fodder. It doesn't sound. It has no distinguishing marks. A lot of it you can't tell one from the other. There is too much of it, just too much of it," the high-spending flamboyant rock legend lamented.

The 54-year-old singer and composer, born Reginald Kenneth Dwight who was knighted in 1998, harked back to the old days when he burst onto the music scene in league with songwriter Bernie Taupin more than 30 years ago.

"I would ban every single video being made—by a new band anyway. I would just get them on the road . . . playing second on the bill to people. That is how I started out," he said.

Immediate profits

John, who petulantly announced he was quitting the music scene last year but is still going strong, regretted the emphasis put on immediate profits by the record companies.

"Nowadays, they think more about their quarterly earnings and there is no longevity. There is no thinking, 'We want this artist to be around in seven to 12 years time,'" he said. *Reuters*

Robinsons Department Store
Heat Beat
www.rds.com.ph
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Robinsons Starmills Pampanga | Tutuban Center | Waltermart Sta. Rosa

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Citibank Installment Loan. Give us a call (from 8:30 am to 8:30 pm Monday to Saturday and 8:30 am to 5:30 pm Sunday), answer a few questions and we'll take care of the rest including delivering the loan proceeds to you. Borrow from P 15,000 up to P 1,000,000. No collateral needed. Initially available in Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Bulacan and Rizal Province. Terms and Conditions apply.

100 YEARS IN THE PHILIPPINES

citibank

O'DONNELL. Has hosted her weekday talk show for six years.

Rosie O'Donnell gets nine Emmy nods as show nears end

NEW YORK—Rosie O'Donnell's daily chat show snagged nine Daytime Emmy nominations including best talk show and best host just weeks before she plans to bid farewell to the six-year-old program.

"The Rosie O'Donnell Show" was nominated for Outstanding Talk Show, going for its second win in a row, and O'Donnell is in the running for Outstanding Talk Show Host, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (Natas) said.

Shared award

Last year, O'Donnell shared the best host award with Regis Philbin, who this year also was nominated with co-host Kelly Ripa for Outstanding Talk Show Host. Their syndicated program "Live with Regis and Kelly" was nominated for Outstanding Talk Show.

The 29th Annual Daytime Emmy Awards presentation will be broadcast on May 17 on CBS from Madison Square Garden in New York.

O'Donnell is expected to tape her final episode of the syndicated program on May 22, and plans to spend more time with her young children. Like many talk shows, O'Donnell's ratings have faded in recent years.

A new talk show hosted by actress Caroline Rhea is set to replace O'Donnell's later this year.

Daytime Emmy candidates

Walt Disney Co.'s ABC soap opera "All My Children" led the field of daytime Emmy candidates this year with a total of 21 nominations, followed by Viacom Inc.'s CBS network soaps "As The World Turns" with 17, and "Guiding Light" with 14 each.

Soap opera icon Susan Lucci, who has nabbed just one award in 20 tries as best actress in a soap opera, was nominated once again for her role as vixen Erica Kane in ABC's "All My Children."

Ripa, who does double duty as talk show host and soap opera actress, was also tapped in the category of Outstanding Supporting Actress In a Drama Series, for her role as Hayley Santos on "All My Children." *Reuters*

> O'Donnell is expected to tape the final episode of her syndicated program on May 22

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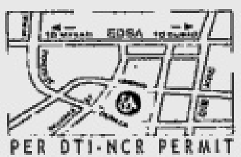

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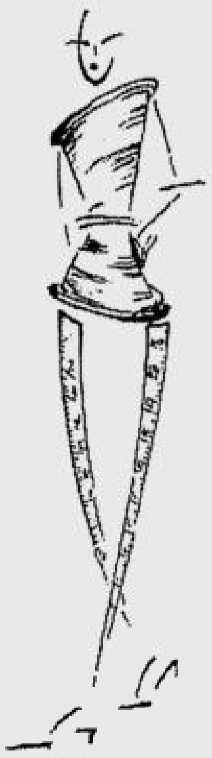

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Kidman, Spacek and Berry in close Oscar race

By Jill Serjeant

KIDMAN, BERRY AND SPACEK. And the Academy's Best Actress awardee is—?

LOS ANGELES—If life was a Hollywood movie, Nicole Kidman would crown a year of personal woes and professional triumph by walking off into the sunset this Sunday with her first Oscar.

And the audience would stand up and cheer because, when it comes to sympathy votes, Kidman's already a winner.

Heartbreak

In the past year, the tall redhead has bounced back from the heartbreak of being dumped by husband Tom Cruise, losing a baby in a miscarriage and fending off a stalker to turn in three topnotch movie performances and a hit record with British pop star Robbie Williams.

And she has done it all with the grace and glamour that is the stuff of the true movie superstar.

"The show must go on," she said, braving the paparazzi at the Cannes Film Festival last year, just weeks after the surprise breakup of her 10-year marriage to Cruise.

"Now I can wear heels," she quipped a few months later.

Kidman, 34, has already picked up a Golden Globe for her role as the doomed courtesan in "Moulin Rouge," won critical acclaim for the thriller "The Others" and delivered a strong performance as a Russian bride-for-hire in "Birthday Girl."

Remake

Last year, Kidman and Williams recorded a remake of the Frank and Nancy Sinatra duet "Something Stupid."

And last week she was named Entertainment Weekly's Entertainer of the Year for 2001.

"In a weird way, the best and the worst of times always come together," she remarked when collecting her Golden Globe in January.

Alas, real life doesn't always have such happy endings and Kidman faces a strong challenge in the best actress race from Sissy Spacek and Halle Berry in one of the most unpredictable Oscar cliffhangers in years.

"The sympathy vote is a very strong factor," said Tom O'Neil, author of "The Ultimate Guide to the Oscars" and host of the website goldderby.com.

"Not just the sympathy vote for her losing a fairy tale marriage, but a salute to her personally for having gone from the discarded Mrs. Tom Cruise to being Nicole Kidman, superstar. That's a Hollywood Cinderella story that they may want to crown with a golden Oscar," O'Neil said.

Powerful comeback performance

Yet Spacek, 52, is also riding the crest of a wave in a powerful comeback performance in the harrowing domestic drama "In the Bedroom" after years out of the spotlight.

Spacek, as small and self-effacing as Kidman is tall and glamorous, has already picked up an armful of trophies for her role as a grief-stricken mother that has made her one of the most feted older women in an industry that is famous for shunning females who dare to display their wrinkles.

Spacek has focused on raising a family since the mid-1980s and has not won an Oscar since playing country music star Loretta Lynn in "Coal Miner's Daughter" in 1980.

In the assessment of website reel.com, Spacek has everything going for her.

"She's been in the business for 30 years and never turned in a bad performance. This, plus the fact that 'In the Bedroom' gives her one of her best roles in years, will bring Spacek her second Oscar," the reel.com website predicted confidently.

Time magazine film critic Richard Schickel would have agreed—until Halle Berry caused a stir by beating both Kidman and Spacek for the Screen Actors Guild award last week for her performance in "Monster's Ball."

Shoo-in

"I thought for a while that Sissy Spacek was a shoo-in for the Oscar but now I'm coming to the view that Halle Berry is going to take it," said Schickel.

Berry, 33, whose movie career has moved slowly but surely upward, portrays a woman overtaken by grief and rage in the racially charged drama that has been critically acclaimed but had only modest box-office success.

She also happens to be black, and Hollywood is abuzz with expectation that the movie industry will rebuff criticism that it has too often overlooked minority actors in the past.

"I think she has come along very nicely. Her work is good and here is a place where press chat may be having an influence with Academy voters. There has been a lot of talk about the lack of Oscars for black people throughout the years. I think maybe that's sunk in," Schickel said.

And that would make not only a Cinderella story, but also a place in Oscar history books!

Reuters

Passion and acrimony at the Academy awards

By Nestor U. Torre

REPORTS from Hollywood have it that "A Beautiful Mind" is a frontrunner in the Best Picture race in the 2001 Oscar film awards competition that is set to announce its winners on March 24. Since there are only a couple of days left before "O-Day," nominees' rivalry is really heating up, with a lot of the passion and acrimony revolving around the fight for the Best Picture award.

Fighting dirty

Unfortunately, the acrimony is getting out of hand, and some nominees are suspected of fighting dirty in order to reduce their competitors' chances of defeating them. This has been particularly evident in the case of "A Beautiful Mind," which has been the subject of black propaganda these past couple of weeks.

The criticism goes this way: "A Beautiful Mind" shouldn't win because it is a flawed and even distorted dramatization of the life of its protagonist, the brilliant Nobel Laureate for economics, Dr. John Nash Jr.

The film builds Nash up as a true-blue hero despite his decade-long battle against severe mental illness—or because of it. But the naysayers gripe that, in real life, Nash was far from heroic. They describe him as a bad father, a homosexual, and an anti-Semite.

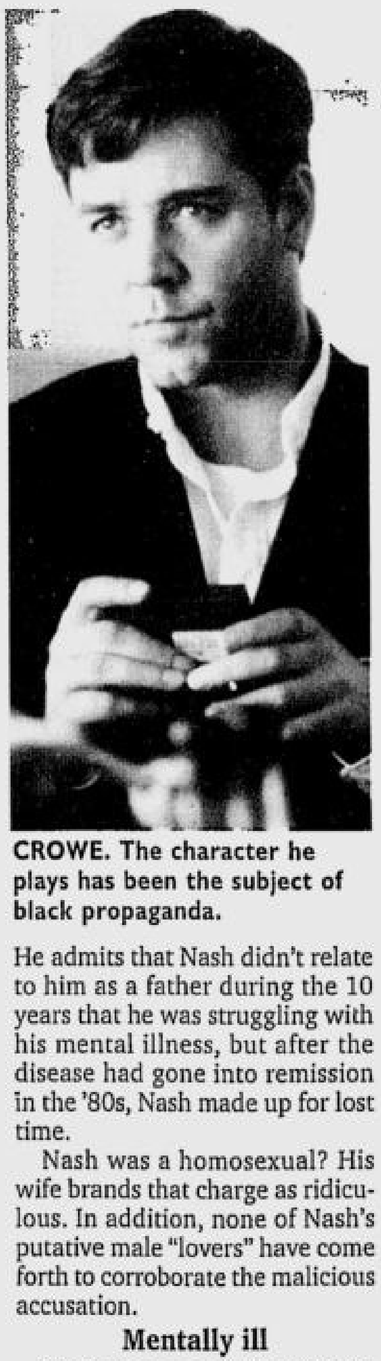
For proof positive, they point to the Nash biography by Sylvia Nasar on which the film was based. Since the movie isn't an accurate depiction of Nash, the negative argument goes, it shouldn't win the Oscar for Best Picture. Will this campaign of vilification influence the US film academy's 4,000 voters against giving "A Beautiful Mind" Oscar's nod? Well, we'll soon find out.

Broadcast journalist

But Mike Wallace, the famous broadcast journalist, is among those who don't believe the black propaganda against Nash, and he doesn't think that it will drastically erode the movie's popularity among the academy's voters.

Wallace came to this conclusion after doing an in-depth feature on Nash for the "60 Minutes" program. Interviewed in turn by Larry King last Saturday, Wallace debunked the naysayers' critical notes, one by one:

Nash was a bad father to his son by his wife, Alicia? No, the son himself denies that charge.



CROWE. The character he plays has been the subject of black propaganda.

He admits that Nash didn't relate to him as a father during the 10 years that he was struggling with his mental illness, but after the disease had gone into remission in the '80s, Nash made up for lost time.

Nash was a homosexual? His wife brands that charge as ridiculous. In addition, none of Nash's putative male "lovers" have come forth to corroborate the malicious accusation.

Mentally ill

Nash was an anti-Semite? He *did* make anti-Jew statements—but this was when he was mentally ill, so those statements can't be held against him.

Nash admits saying and doing other weird or terrible things when he was mentally ill, like crowning himself the "Emperor of Antarctica (!)" But Wallace firmly believes that he does not deserve the vituperative criticism he has been getting, and attributes the orchestrated vilification directly to the rivals of "A Beautiful Mind" in the Oscars race.

Naturally, Wallace hopes that the film on Nash will be victorious at the Oscars, despite the bad press it's been getting. To further prove that Nash is being unfairly victimized, Wallace notes that author Sylvia Nasar has written a letter debunking the charges against Nash and "A Beautiful Mind."

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The first golden decade of the Famas–the 1950s

SAMPAGUITA Pictures honors Romeo Vasquez (standing, third from left) for winning the Famas International Prestige Award in 1957. Seated are Marichu Vera-Perez, Andy Moral, Vic and Lynn Pareja, Chari Araullo. Standing are Chaning Carlos, a guest, Vasquez, Greg Martin, Susan Roces and Pepito Vera-Perez.

By Dr. Lynn S. Pareja

(Continuation)

EVERYBODY was aware that Alicia Vergel could not come to receive her best actress award for "Basahang Ginto" because of a bad leg injury she had suffered on the set of "Diwani" while shooting on location in Los Baños. But little did they know that Ms Azucena Vera Perez, who was escorted on stage by Dr. Jose R. Perez to receive the award on behalf of Alicia, also had to hurry back to the hospital where their son, Pepito, was confined.

Nida Blanca was also not around to receive her award as best supporting actress of "Korea," so it was LVN PRO Fred Cruz who went up the stage. With all his excess avoirdupois, he looked more like a fully-clothed Japanese wrestler.

Newcomer

Another newcomer, Rita Gomez, who did not need a stuntman to steer her horse up the 100 steps of the ancient Taal church for her role in "Sawa sa Lumang Simboryo," almost wrested away the best supporting actress award from Nida Blanca. She lost by only one point.

Gil de Leon won the best supporting actor award for his role in "Korea." It was a night of jubilation for his proud family composed of wife Lilia Dizon and children Pinky and Christopher de Leon.

(Two years later, Lilia Dizon won a nomination for best actress at the Cambodia Film Festival for "Kandelerong Pilak," 1954. And 20 years later, Christopher de Leon won the Famas award for best actor for his performance in the Lino Brocka film, "Tinimbang Ka, Ngunit Kulang.")

That first year of the Famas, two technical awards went to Lebran Productions for the best musical score in "Kalbaryo ni Hesus" won by Professor Julio Esteban Anguita, and the best sound recording for the same picture by Charles Gray. Premiere Productions, through M.J. Vistan, jr., bagged the third technical award for "Sawa sa Lumang Simboryo," won by Emmanuel Rojas for best cinematography.

There was no award for best editing. It was an oversight which the Famas made haste to rectify the very next year, when the second set of Famas awards included an award for the best film editor of the year.

The Famas jurors came from two sectors—those who worked in the making of motion pictures also known as "studio representatives," and members of the 4th estate who spent the year 'round viewing and writing about local films. A few were members of the Philippine Movie Press Club (PMPC).

PMPC election

The year before, on Oct. 4, 1952, the PMPC held their election of officers, voting into office the following: fictionist and freelance writer D. Paolo Dizon, president; Liwayway editor Gemiliano Pineda, vice president; DMHM-Philippines Herald columnist Lena Strait, secretary; Literary-Song Movie Magazine editor Vic Generoso, treasurer; and embassy officer and journalist Delfin F. Gamboa, auditor.

PRO's from the movie companies like Eliong Navarro of Premiere, Fred Cruz of LVN, Uds Villacorta of Sampaguita and Donnie Salvador of Lebran could join the PMPC but were excluded from the Famas because of the nature of their work. Under the unwritten rule of "double compensation," any writer who was under the payroll of a movie company must choose to serve only one master: either the print media or the movie studio.

There were no talent managers for show biz folk in 1953. Most actors were built up by the studios where they worked exclusively under long-term contracts. When Nena Cardenas of Premiere took over the role meant for Alicia Vergel in "El Indio" because the latter needed time to recuperate fro. her leg injury, the matter was negotiated between the studio bosses. The billing for the Sampaguita Pictures film carried the acknowledgement, "Compliments of Premiere Productions" below Nena Cardenas' name.

Great expectations

1953 was a year of great expectations. It heralded the coming of television to the country. It also marked the year of the establishment of the Federation of Movie Producers in Southeast Asia. Member nations were Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Free China, Thailand, Hong Kong, and the Federated States of Malaya.

In Europe, Manuel Conde's "Genghis Khan" was making waves after it was entered in the Venice Film Festival, the first Filipino motion picture to be accepted in competition with the world's best at a prestigious international filmfest. "Genghis Khan" competed with 20-plus pictures including Kenji Mizoguchi's "The Life of Oharu," Charlie Chaplin's "Limelight," John Ford's "The Quiet Man," Alessandro Blasetti's "Altri Tempi," Howard Hawks' "The Big Sky," and Federico Fellini's "The White Sheik, among others. The winner was Rene Clement's "Forbidden Games."

It was the first time Filipinos in Paris and from other parts of the world saw the Philippine flag by the Palais du Congree, and on the day of the screening, neon lights blazed the title of the movie, "Genghis Khan."

For its success in Venice, "the Conde miracle," (Kislap Magazine, Oct. 1, 1952) was awarded a special citation by the Famas in 1953.

> In Europe, Manuel Conde's 'Genghis Khan' was making waves after it was entered in the Venice Film Festival, the first local movie to be accepted for international competition

Bloody elections

But all was not well on the home front. The 1949 elections which brought Elpidio Quirino to the presidency was described as the bloodiest and dirtiest to date in the turbulent history of Philippine politics. Some people, despairing of democracy, turned to the Huks. After the 1949 elections, the Huks openly announced their intentions of replacing the government.

During the term of Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay, a revitalized Philippine Army aided by the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (Jusmag) launched a concerted military and psychological campaign against the Huks. The Huk movement was struck a crippling blow in October 1950. Magsaysay won the 1953 presidential elections and immediately inaugurated a policy of resettling surrendered Huks on homesteads in Mindanao.

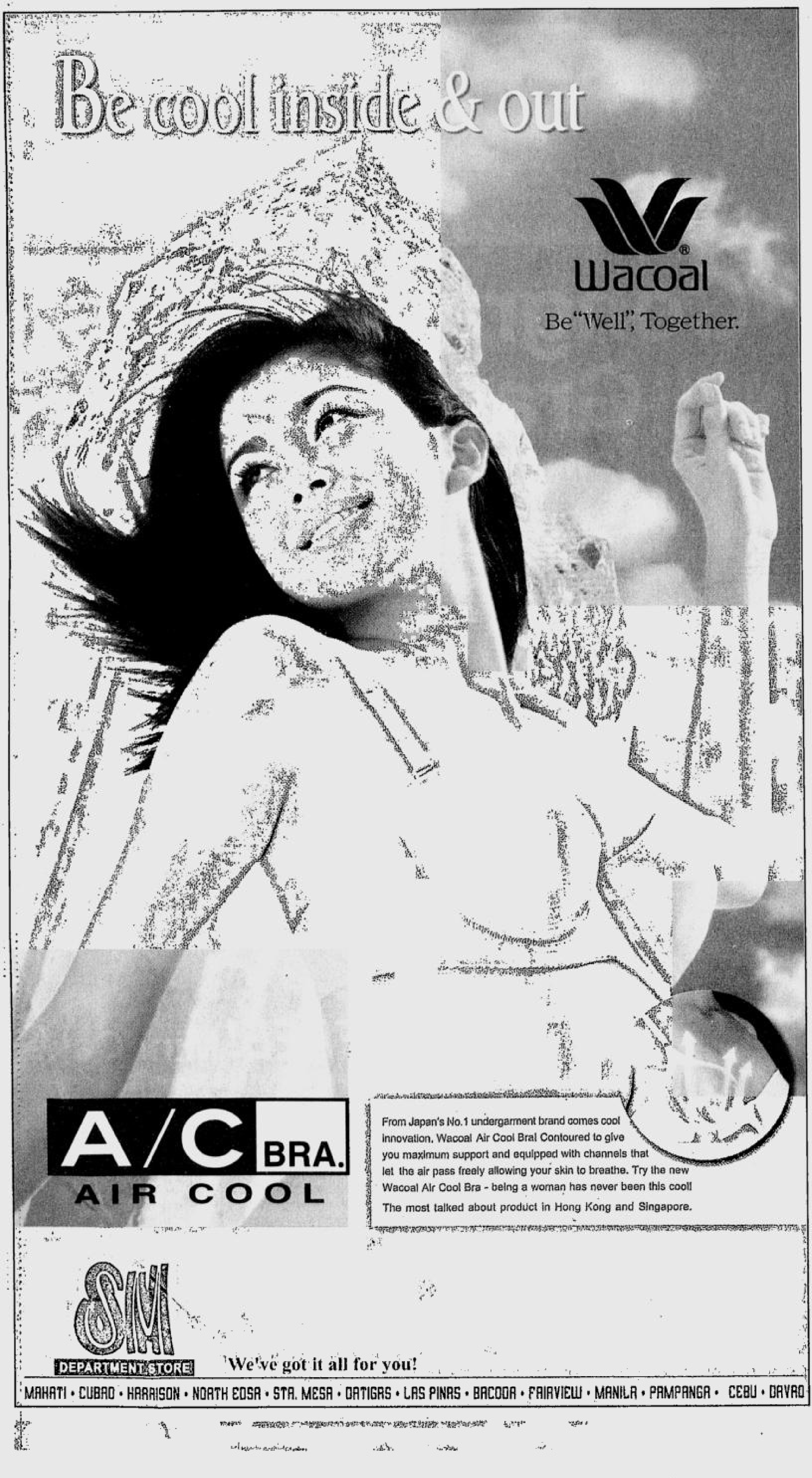
So popular was the Huk issue that LVN made a film which became the winner of the Famas best picture award in 1954, "Huk sa Bagong Pamumuhay." It also won the best director award for Lamberto V. Avellana. Other awards won by the film were best actor, Jose Padilla Jr. and best supporting actor, Leroy Salvador.

Winners

The other Famas winners who won performing awards came from Sampaguita Pictures: Carmen Rosales won the best actress award for her dramatic portrayal of a has-been star trying to retrieve her faded glory in "Inspirasyon." The same film gave Katy de la Cruz the best supporting actress trophy.

A dramatic film by People's Pictures, "Habang Buhay," starring Nena Cardenas, won three Famas awards for the Premiere group. The winners were: Teodorico Santos for best screenplay, Ricardo Marcelino for best cinematography and Ariston Avelino for best musical score.

Lebran Films' "May Isang Tsuper ng Taxi," a comedy, won two awards: the best sound recording trophy for Angelo Larraga and best film editing trophy for Antonio G. Verches. ***(To be concluded)***



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Glorious and embarrassing moments at the Oscars

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

EVERY year, more than a billion people from all over the world gather around their television sets to witness Hollywood's most glamorous night—the Oscars! It is a night when the biggest stars in the Hollywood galaxy gather to honor their best and most accomplished colleagues, and to show off surgery-assisted heavenly bodies, their to-die-for escorts, their diamonds and signature clothes *and* their eccentricities.

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This week's Q and A:

"I have been following this year's Oscars race since the awards season began. Like the Miss Universe pageant, it is the annual event my family and I look forward to watching. Any trivia on the Academy Awards you can share with us?"—*Dr. Judith Borromeo, Mexico, Pampanga.*

The Hollywood career of the first-ever Best Actor awardee, Emil Jannings (1928's "The Last Command") ended when the talkies became popular, because he had a thick German accent.

Ten actresses (Jodie Foster, Jane Fonda, Glenda Jackson, Meryl Streep, Sally Field, Elizabeth Taylor, Bette Davis, Vivien Leigh, Luise Rainer, Olivia de Havilland) won Best Actress twice, but only Katharine Hepburn won it *four* times ("Morning Glory" in 1932; "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" in 1967; "The Lion in Winter" in 1968, in a tie with Barbra Streisand for "Funny Girl"; "On Golden Pond" in 1981). No actor has yet won three Best Actor Awards.

The shortest performances to win an Oscar were Anthony Quinn's for 1956's "Lust for Life" and Judi Dench's for 1998's "Shakespeare in Love." They were onscreen for only eight minutes, although Quinn's was a few seconds shorter than the well-loved Dame's.

The only two sisters to have won Oscars were Joan Fontaine ("Suspicion") and Olivia de Havilland ("To Each His Own," "The Heiress"). The life-long feud of the sisters really heated up the 1941 derby when Fontaine's performance was chosen over de Havilland's ("Hold Back the Dawn").

They both denied that they were feuding. However, 40 years later at a film festival in Montreal, Joan still maintained that there was no feud *but* that it *was* Olivia's fault. Huh?

Only two married couples have won Oscars for acting roles: Laurence Olivier ("Hamlet") and Vivien Leigh ("A Streetcar Named Desire"), *and* Paul Newman ("The Color of Money") and Joanne Woodward ("Three Faces of Eve").

> The only two actors to return their Oscars were George C. Scott and Marlon Brando

The only two actors to *return* their Oscars were George C. Scott ("Patton") and Marlon Brando ("The Godfather").

The youngest winner was Tatum O'Neal for Peter Bogdanovich's "Paper Moon." She was nine when she won Best Supporting Actress, although her victory marked the most extreme case of a lead winning a supporting award—she was in virtually *every* frame of the film!

When Norman Taurog directed his nephew, Jackie Cooper, then 10, in "Skippy," he had trouble getting him to cry. So he told the boy if he didn't cry, he would shoot the boy's dog! The film was a hit, Cooper got a nomination, and Taurog won his Oscar. Good thing they didn't have Bantay-Bata then!

Whoopi Goldberg was the first woman to host the Oscars.

The first Best Picture winners were 1927's "The Last Command" and "Wings," the only silent films to win the award. The first foreign language film to be nominated for Best Picture was Jean Renoir's "The Grand Illusion."

The only actors to have won in *both* leading and supporting categories were Meryl Streep, Jessica Lange, Ingrid Bergman, Maggie Smith, Helen Hayes, Jack Lemmon, Jack Nicholson and Gene Hackman.

Streep, who shares with Katharine Hepburn the most number of nominations (*12!*) for an actor, has the distinction of being the first actor to be nominated in a film by horror master Wes Craven for a role that Madonna turned down ("Music of the Heart"). Jessica Lange won in 1994 for "Blue Sky," a film which had been sitting on the shelf for three years before it was released.

Tallest actors

Tallest actors to be nominated: Michael Clarke Duncan ("The Green Mile"), is 6'4" and Janet McTeer ("Tumbleweeds"), 6'2", both cited in 1999.

Generally regarded as *the* best film ever made is Orson Welles' "Citizen Kane," but it only managed to win "Best Screenplay" at the Oscars.

Miyoshi Umeki was the first Asian actress to win an Oscar, for 1956's "Sayonara."

Jon Voight's "Midnight Cowboy" was the *only* X-rated film ever to win Best Picture. In those days, though, "X" didn't mean pornography, just "for adults only."

The longest film to win an Oscar, Bondarchuk's "War and Peace," ran for *seven hours and 33 minutes!* Kevin Costner, Oliver Stone and Lav Diaz must have loved this film, huh?

Excellent films *never* nominated for Best Picture: Alfred Hitchcock's "Notorious;" Woody Allen's "Manhattan;" Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey;" John Huston's "The African Queen;" Charlie Chaplin's "City Lights;" Stanley Donnen/Gene Kelly's "Singing in the Rain."

Wrong Frank

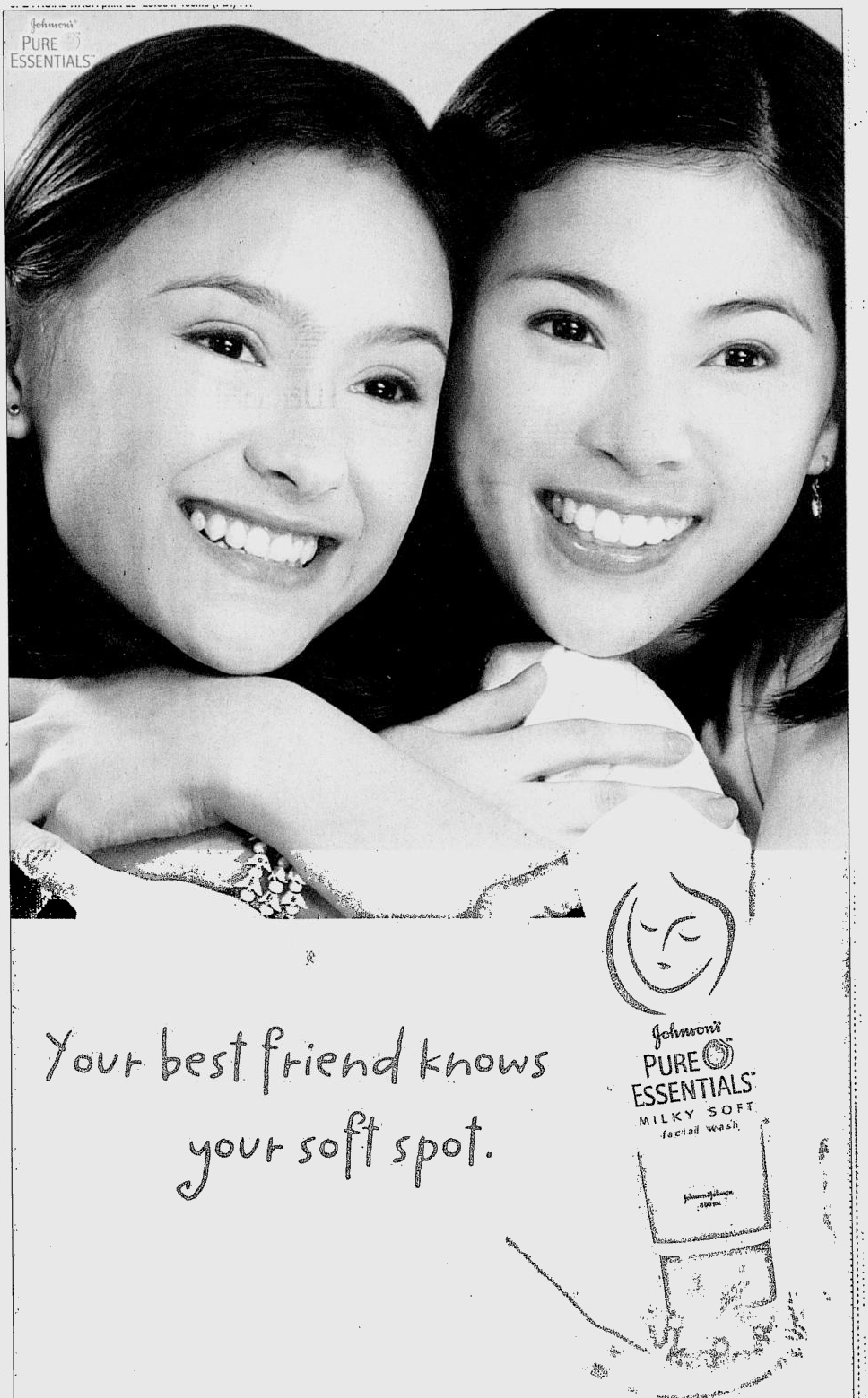
A most embarrassing moment in the Oscars occurred in 1932 when emcee Will Rogers opened the envelope containing the name of the Best Director and said, "Come and get it, Frank!" without saying which of the two nominated Franks (Capra for "Lady for A Day" and Lloyd for "Cavalcade") had won. Frank Capra was halfway to the podium when Rogers clarified that it was Lloyd who won!

The following year, though, Capra recovered from that embarrassment when "It Happened One Night" became the first picture to sweep Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor (Clark Gable), Best Actress (Claudette Colbert) and Best Screenplay. No film would duplicate that feat until "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," 40 years later.

The "deaf" children who *signed* "You Light Up My Life" with Debbie Boone at the 1977 Oscars were actually neither "deaf," nor were they signing anything that had to do with the song.

The guy (Robert Opal) who streaked the 1973 Oscars in between the acting awards led David Niven to say onstage, "The only laugh *that* man will probably ever get is for stripping and showing his shortcomings!"

QUINN AND DENCH. Shortest award-winning performances.



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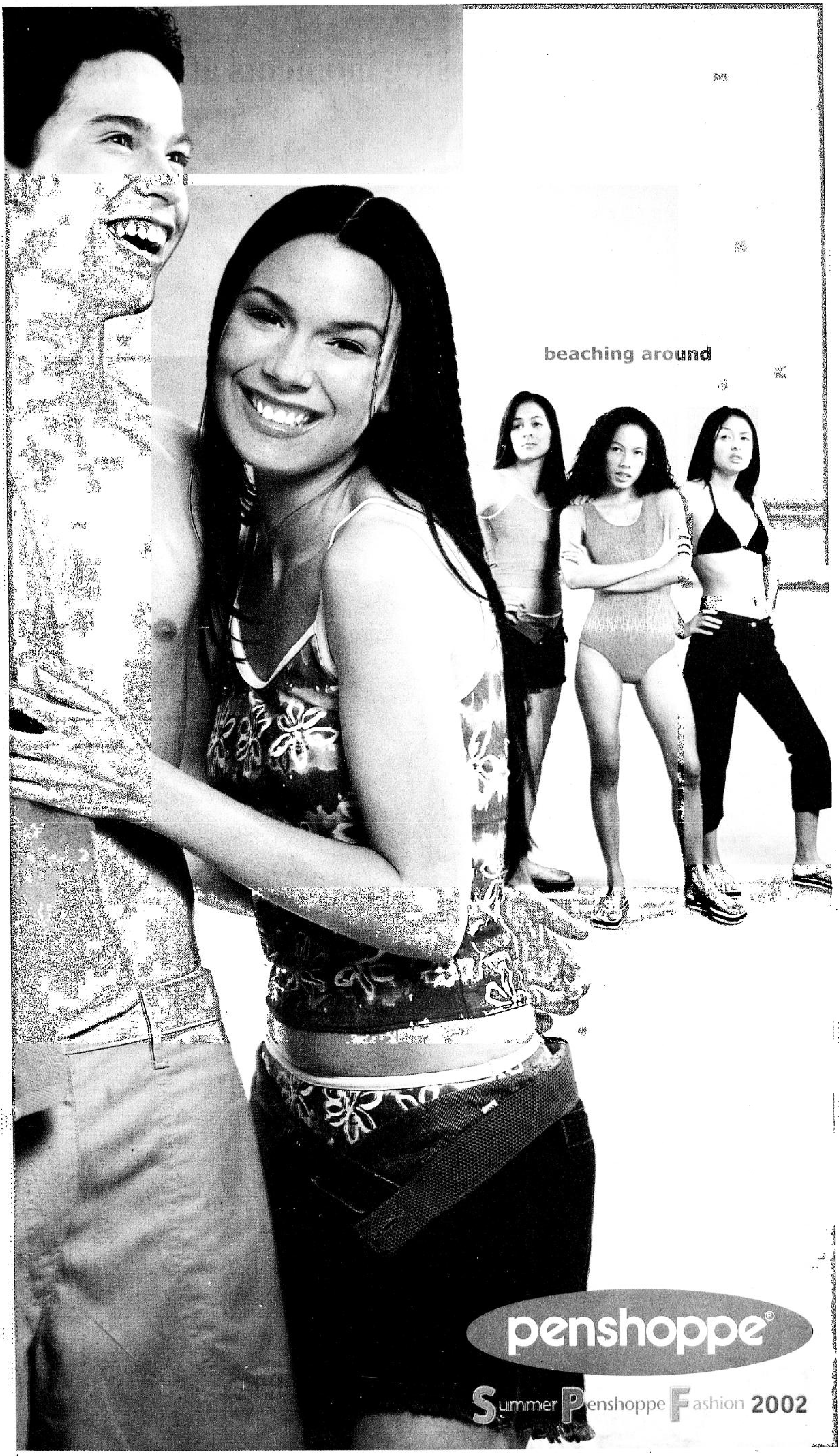
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MYERS. Back in business with a studio he was at war with two years ago.

Mike Myers to star in 'Cat in the Hat'

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—After lighting up box-office hits as a bucktoothed superspy and a grumpy green Ogre, comedian Mike Myers has his paws around a new role—a big, mischievous cat.

> The film is expected to follow the story line of the fast-talking cat who tries to bring cheer to two bored children on a rainy afternoon

Title role

Myers will play the title role in a live-action movie version of the Dr. Seuss classic "The Cat in the Hat," putting him back in business with the studio and producers he was at war with two years ago, Universal Pictures said on Thursday.

The film about the lanky, rambunctious feline in a striped stove-top hat will mark the second Seuss character brought to the big screen by Universal and production partner Imagine Entertainment, which teamed up for 2000's top-grossing holiday hit "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

It also returns Myers to the Universal-Imagine fold for the first time since the three-way settlement of their legal feud over an aborted attempt to develop a movie based on Myers' "Saturday Night Live" character "Dieter."

In a joint statement, Myers and Imagine executive Brian Grazer, the film's producer, said the "conflicts over 'Dieter' are long behind us and only served to strengthen the relationship we've enjoyed for more than 10 years."

Espionage parodies

Myers, who won A-list status playing goofy, swinging spy "Austin Powers" and Dr. Evil in a pair of espionage parodies, was most recently in theaters as the voice of the green ogre in the animated storybook spoof "Shrek," last year's second-highest-grossing film.

Universal and Imagine each sued Myers for breach of contract in the summer of 2000, accusing him of abandoning "Dieter," which he had agreed to help write and star in for $20 million.

Myers alleged in a countersuit that Universal was trying to bully him into making the film with a script he found unsatisfactory, despite a contract that gave him final script approval. His suit named Grazer as a "co-conspirator" for divulging his home address to a process server who allegedly chased Myers and his wife "down dark, winding and unlit streets."

As part of the settlement, "Dieter" was shelved and the three parties agreed that Myers would write his next original character-based comedy as a co-production for Universal and DreamWorks, whose principals, Steven Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg, reportedly helped broker the deal.

"Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat" will be jointly released by Universal and DreamWorks, though it was not clear whether that film satisfies the terms of the legal settlement since the Seuss character is obviously not a Myers creation.

Squabble

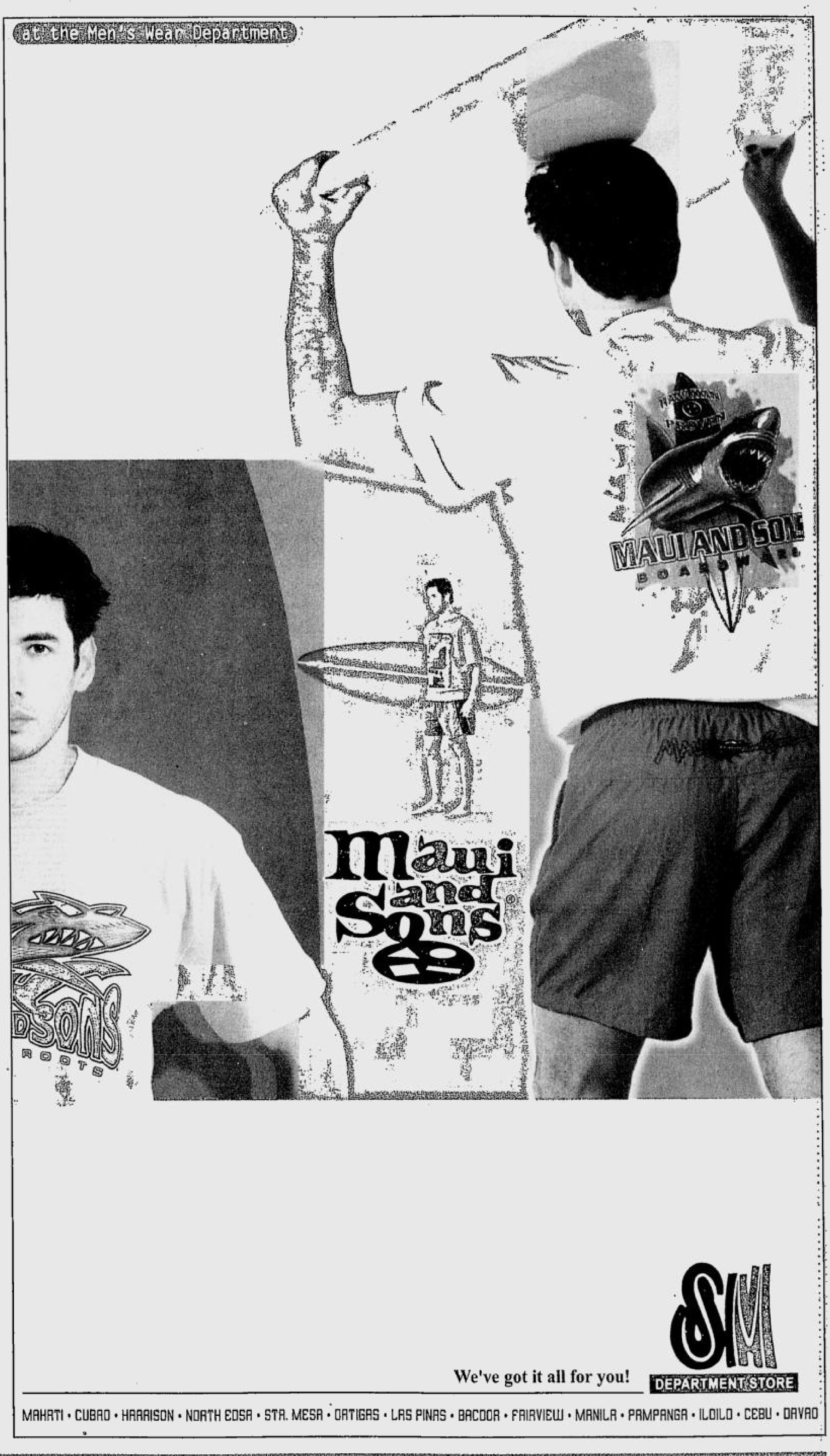
But Grazer was quoted in entertainment trade paper Daily Variety as saying the idea of casting Myers as the Cat actually occurred to him in the midst of the "Dieter" squabble.

"The Cat in the Hat," first published in 1957, remains one of the best-selling hardcover children's books of all time.

The film is expected to follow the story line of the fast-talking cat who tries to bring cheer to two bored children on a rainy afternoon while their mother is out, only to turn the house upside down with a series of wild games with two ill-mannered playmates, Thing One and Thing Two.

Universal said the movie, to go into production this fall, will bring original characters to the big screen, as well as some new ones created especially for the film.

Universal Studios is a unit of French media giant Vivendi Universal. *Reuters*



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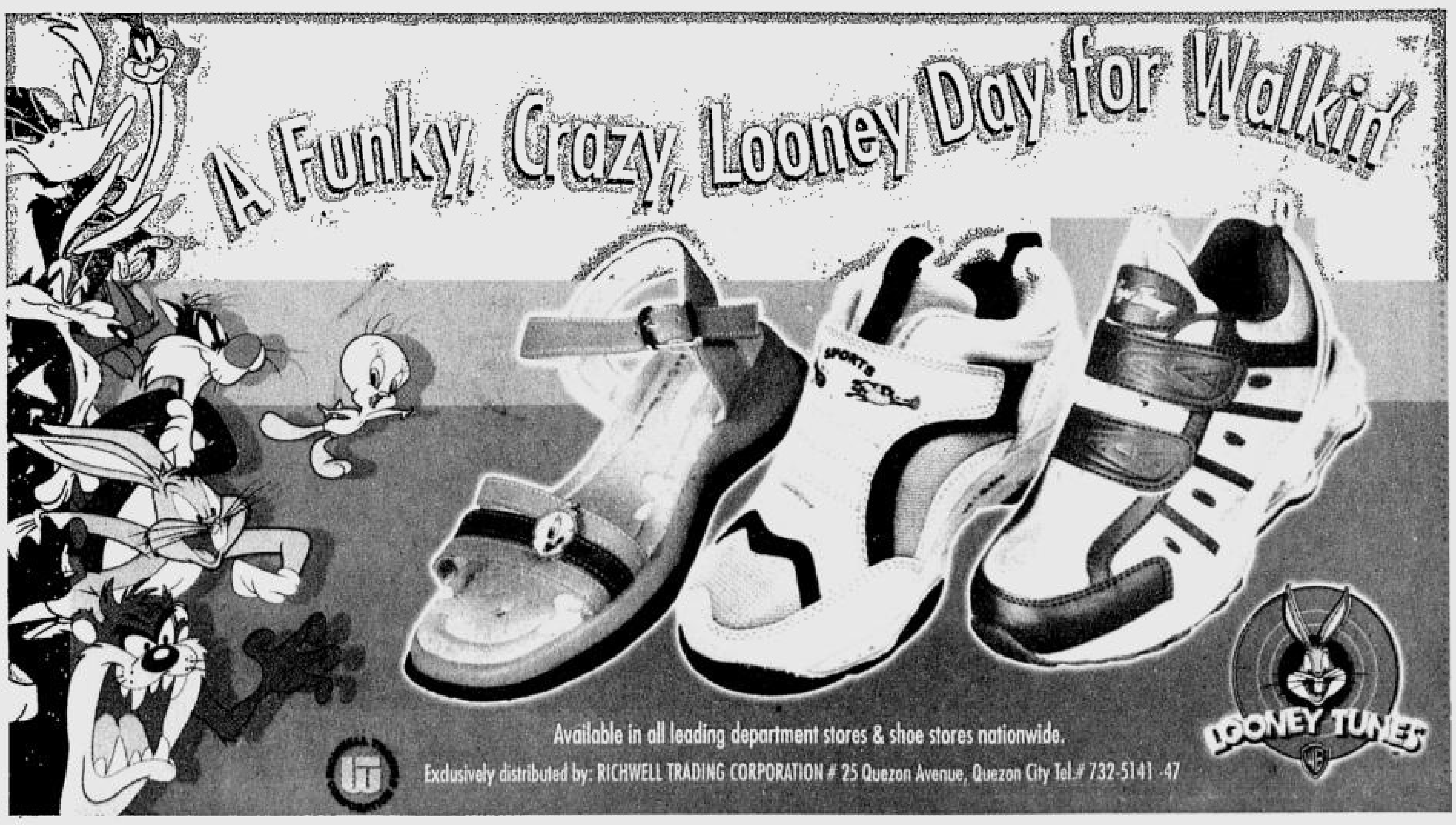

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Staging a Hollywood fashion show takes many players

By Samantha Critchell

NEW YORK—It sounds like the setup to a bad joke: How many people does it take to put together an Oscar outfit?

About a half-dozen, or more.

But that's not a punch line—it's a Hollywood reality.

Take a best-actress nominee, who has a manager, publicist and stylist, all of whom have an idea about what "the dress" should look like. It's the stylist's job to contact a designer's publicist, or several designers' publicists, to get the designer on board.

Biggest stars

The biggest stars are pursued by designers; the biggest designers are pursued by B-list stars who are hoping they'll be photographed at the parties afterward.

"I call it the Oscar sweepstakes," says designer Vera Wang. "If I'm interested in dressing someone, I will contact her. But she has to match my look."

Once the dress is selected, the stylist also coordinates the rest of the ensemble, sometimes down to the star's undergarments.

The stylists will meet with the shoe, purse, jewelry, hair and makeup people who have taken a suite at a hotel hoping they'll be the ones to help dress the Nicole Kidmans and Halle Berrys of the world.

Frenzy

The frenzy in the days leading up to the Oscar ceremony in Hollywood March 24 is part of a calculated marketing effort that most fashion and luxury companies buy into and feed off on, says Tom Julian, fashion commentator for Oscar.com, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' website.

The companies often woo stylists, wining and dining them and treating them like celebrities. That, the companies hope, will lead to product placement.

"In recent years it has become common knowledge that stylists may be shopping or promoting other entities beyond finding a designer dress," says Julian, a trend analyst at Fallon Worldwide ad agency.

The stylists might even be spokesmen for products—and their celebrity clients might not even know it. (Among the products linked to stylists last year were fur coats and teeth-whitening strips.)

Some of this year's nominees, however, have well-documented style preferences which will make it harder for an outside company to infiltrate their fashion camps.

"Nicole Kidman will do the drop-dead glamour thing," predicts Julian.

Style maker

She's known to be a stylemaker and favors European designers who offer cutting-edge designs.

Renee Zellweger, considered a fashion winner at last year's Oscars in a vintage yellow gown, might look to a British designer in a nod to her alter ego in "Bridget Jones's Diary."

Valentino gowns have been good to Berry, and she's likely to stick with him for a beautiful dress that is somehow both sophisticated and girlie.

Jennifer Connelly might be the "get" for a designer this year because she's without a known allegiance to a designer or even a particular style. She's also a chic minimalist New Yorker who wants to be known more as an actress than the best-dressed belle of the ball.

STARS like Laura Linney, Russell Crowe and Catherine Zeta-Jones work hard on their total look to make a big impression on the Oscars' awards night.

"The majority of our Hollywood relationships start outside of the awards shows," says Robert Triefus, head of communications for the Armani Group. "These people are friends of the house. Sometimes they are a personal friend of Mr. Armani."

When Armani begins designing his Oscar collection in the fall, he keeps some of his favorite celebrity clients in mind. He considers an actress' input about the "spirit" of her Oscar dress, but the actual design is left to him.

Latest runway trends

Also, Oscar dresses are created in November, the same time as the designs for the following fall, so the gowns are somewhat influenced by the latest runway trends, according to Triefus.

Wang, whose specialty is sleek and simple styles, says she believes in matching the dress to the image a woman wants to project. For instance, when Holly Hunter won an Oscar for "The Piano," she wanted a very modern dress to contrast the period costumes from the movie, while Charlize Theron wanted a dress that represented 1930s glamour while working on "The Legend of Bagger Vance."

The clock to find "the dress" really starts ticking in mid-February, when the nominations are announced, Triefus says.

Fittings happen in mid-March mostly in Los Angeles but stars will be fitted wherever they happen to be on location, too.

"We can even do a fitting the morning of (the Oscars) at the Los Angeles store," Triefus adds.

Footwear designer Stuart Weitzman will keep his Rodeo Drive store in Beverly Hills open 24 hours a day the week before the Oscars as well as taking a suite at Raffles L'Ermitage Hotel.

Weitzman was forced to scramble the day before the Oscars last year to make new shoes—which had to match an elaborately beaded Escada dress—for Zhang Ziyi ("Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon") because her mother said the sandals Weitzman spent days designing were too sexy.

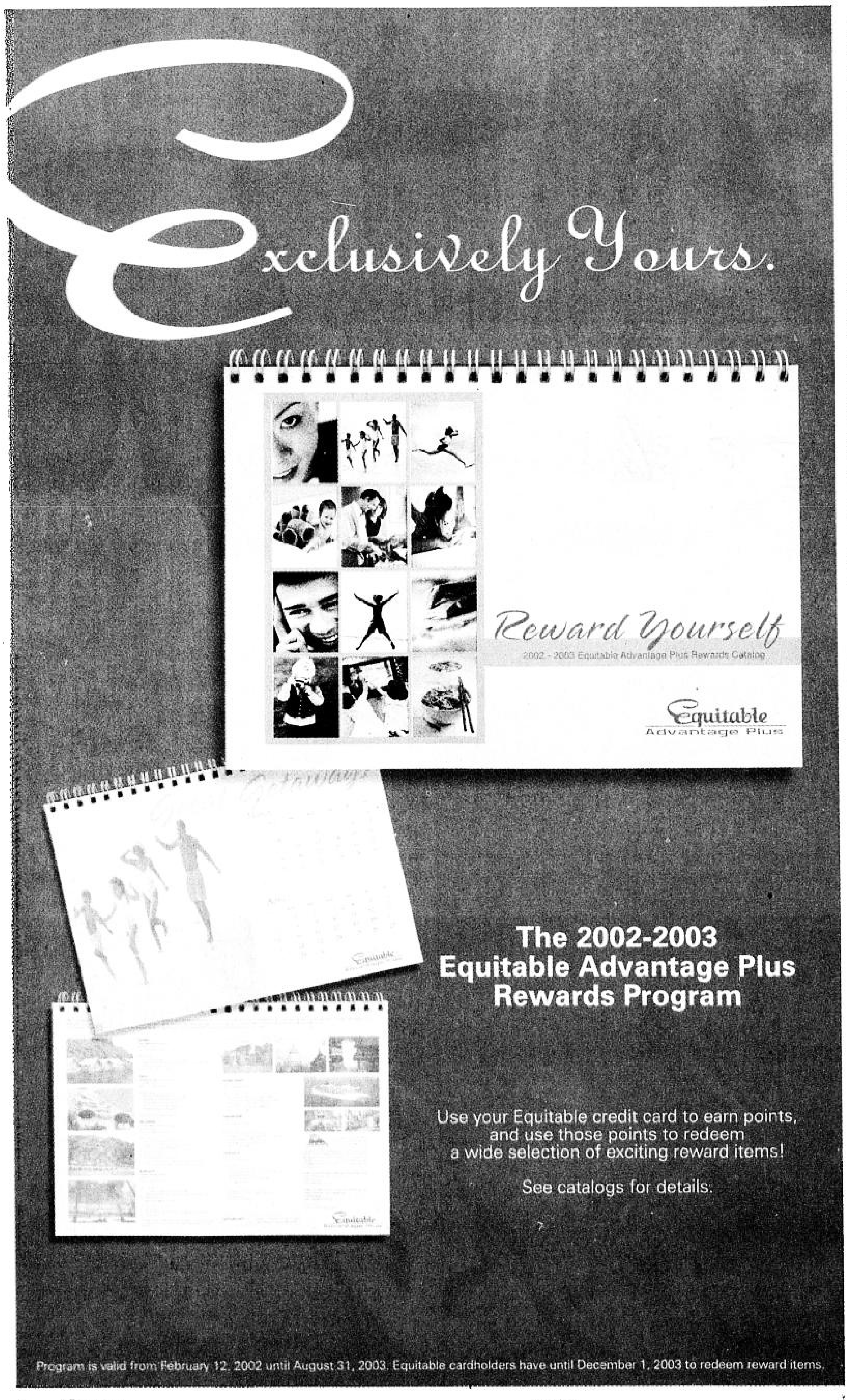
Jewelry designer

This time around, Weitzman teamed with jewelry designer Kwiat and Platinum Guild International to make a pair of $1 million stiletto sandals.

The star who wears the shoes will get $30,000 for the charity of her choice from Weitzman and Kwiat. A celebrity is confirmed to wear them and they've been fitted to her size, but he won't say who it is until the last minute.

Why go through all this trouble for a few minutes on the red carpet?

"A great picture at a great event can make a great career or break a career," says Weitzman. "This is serious business. It is not frivolous." ***AP***



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To Bokod and back

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

THE TRIP to Baguio began so uneventfully that I was lulled into thinking that the rest of my trip was going to be ordinary. Not by a long shot!

I was on my way to photograph Gieson Madiano, the boy who is one of the four Grand Prize winners in RCBC's 8th Kwentong Kalikasan, Katha ng Kabataan with his story, "Ang Tinig."

Scholarship

He will receive P30,000 and a Pacific Plans scholarship worth P25,000 on April 4 at 6 p.m., at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala ave., Makati City.

In Baguio, I bought some clothes for the 11-year-old-boy's pictorial. Then, lunchless, as it was only 10:30 a.m., we drove to Bokod, Benguet.

The 50 kilometers or so to Bokod took us four and a half hours, including getting lost and getting back on track, a bone-jarring, dusty, rough trail that precipitously hugs the sides of the Cordillera mountain range. I never saw so many mountains in my life, and I have never had a bumpier ride that bounced me on the car seat practically every minute of the ride! And yet, one is reminded of the USA's Grand Canyon when you go through this route.

Breathtaking sight

Bokod lies beyond Ambuklao Dam, where the natives have started to culture *tilapia*. Ambuklao is a breathtaking sight as it is surrounded by mountains. Its water is turquoise.

Bokod is a place where there are no newspapers or telephones. They did not even know that Gieson was a winner, and the school practically declared a holiday as the pupils, numbering 175, cheered for him.

The teachers were all agog and they called for Gieson's mother who worked as the civil registrar in the municipality building next door to come over.

She related how she used to bring books left by the Americans in Clark Field for Gieson to read. She is a St. Louis University of Baguio graduate and she hopes Gieson will attend the same school someday.

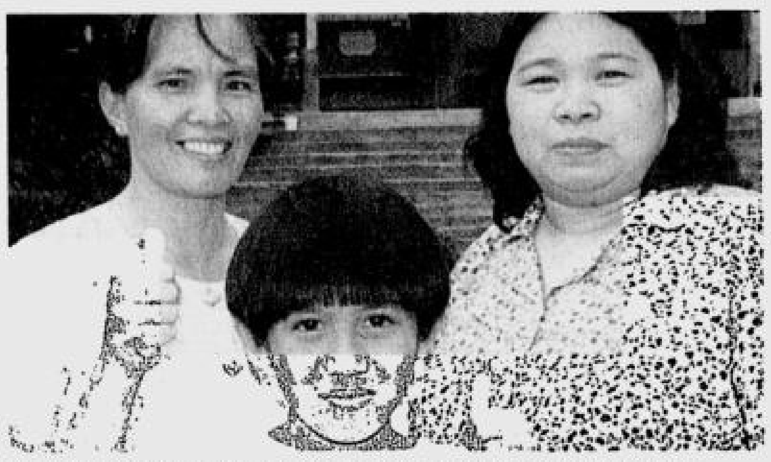
Bokod is such a small community that everything is clustered together tightly. There is a public

TO BOKOD/ P. G3

GIESON makes his school and schoolmates proud of him!

To Bokod . . .

(Fom page G2)



PRINCIPAL Vicenta Sabaoan and Gieson's teacher Prescilla Ebasco share his happiness.

market the size of a master's bedroom with a high ceiling, the police precinct adjacent to it, and a DECS office is beside the Paaralang Sentral ng Bokod. There is also a church and a high school.

Haircut

I had to give Gieson a haircut because I could not see his face. So I put a bowl over his mop hair and cut along its edges. The principal, Mrs. Vicenta Sabaoan and his teacher, Mrs. Prescilla Ebasco could not contain their joy. They did not seem to be aware that the teacher would receive a cash gift of P5,000 and the school, P25,000!

The trip home took only two hours and 45 minutes, and the amazing thing was that a sliver of light illuminated the road ahead until we reached the highway. The thick mist hanging at the edge of the mountains never seemed to envelop the road ahead of us even if it was already 7 p.m. We did not have to use the headlights until a few minutes before we reached the highway. It was an awesome, if not miraculous, experience!

Mandy Navasero Batch 2002 'Learn By Doing' Weekly Shoots

Basic Photography April 17 to May 29. Every Wednesday from 2-5 p.m. With Black-and-White Darkroom Procedure.

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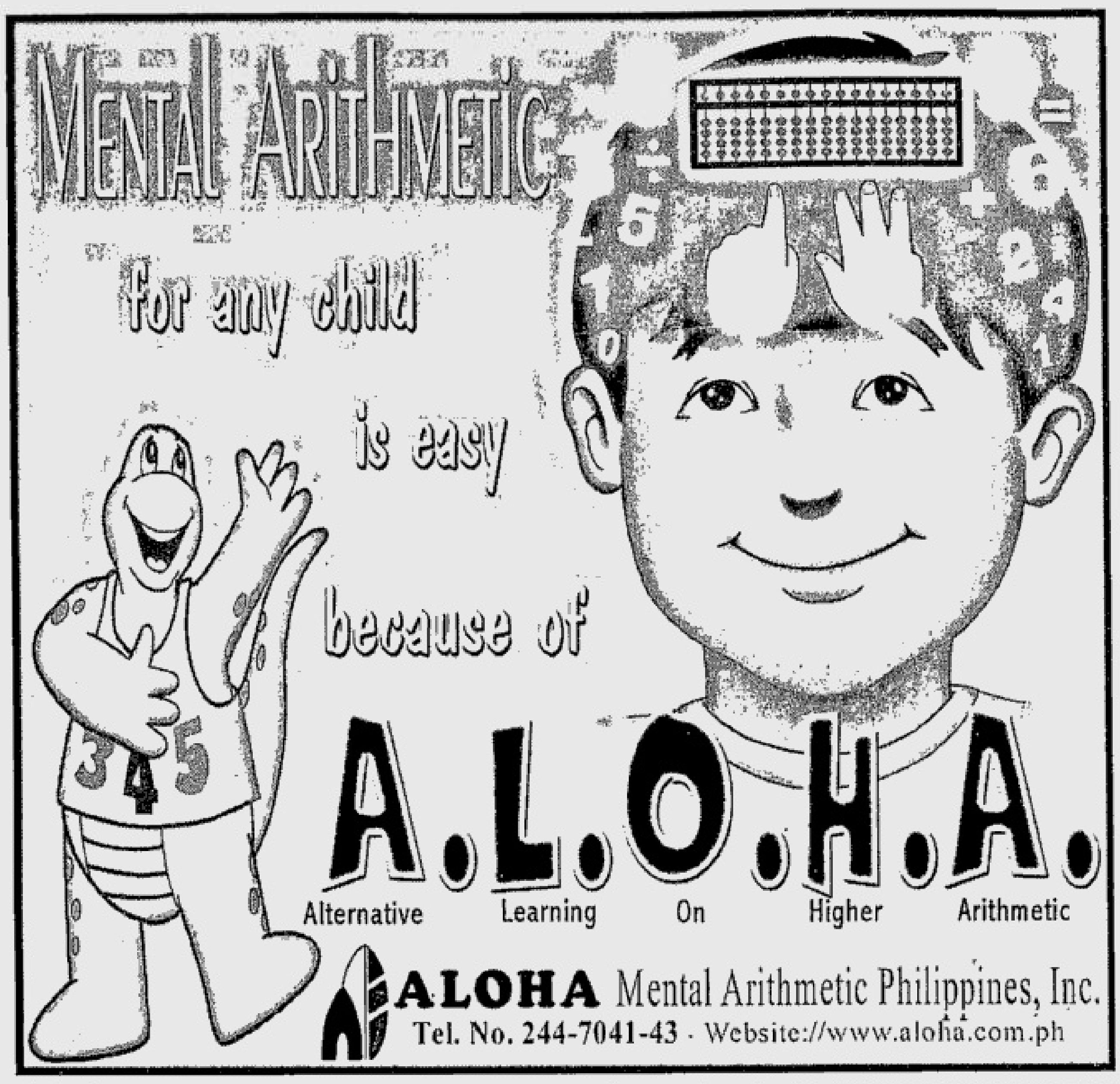

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News that makes a difference

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Min Kwon forges personal bond with her audience

KWON. Sensitive musicianship.

By Nestor U. Torre

THANKS to Jose Mari Chan in his new role as impressario, we had the great pleasure last March 15 of listening to the acclaimed Korean pianist Min Kwon's first and only performance in the Philippines at the Francisco Santiago Hall in Makati City.

Unique artistry

Jomari met the gifted young pianist his way to St. Petersburg last year, and he was so taken with her talent that he decided to invite her to perform here, so that more Filipinos could savor her unique artistry.

That took some doing because the Austria-based artist has a busy international performing career. But Jomari's determination finally paid off last March 15, and despite the fact that she was still experiencing jetlag, Min Kwon gave a ravishingly beautiful and powerful concert at the Francisco Santiago Hall for hundreds of music lovers.

Difficult pieces

With great spirit, she tackled difficult pieces that pushed the challenge of dextrous pianism to the highest levels. She occasionally reminded us of our own Cecille Licad, who has wowed the world with her gift and brio, but without Licad's excessively urgent facial expressions.

Min Kwon was a less theatrical performer, but that doesn't mean that she didn't imbue her performance with high drama. The difference was, she did this not by emoting, but by letting her fingers and the piano keys do the singing and feeling, thus making a similarly vivid impression, but through much more natural means.

Thoughts and feelings

Even better, the Korean pianist didn't just play the piano, she shared her thoughts and feelings by annotating some of the pieces she played. This way, she forged a personal bond between herself and her audience, and between the audience and the music she was interpreting.

As a result, Min Kwon's intimate "Evening of Classical Romance" was one of the most delightful and involving concerts we have attended. Would that other performing artists were as gifted *and* forthcoming! Thanks again, Jomari.

Prestigious

Min Kwon may look very young, but she already holds a Doctorate in Music from the prestigious Julliard School, where she has taught in the piano minor and chamber music departments.

As a performer (she concertized in over 25 countries), she has been hailed for her versatility, sensitive musicianship and dynamic presence onstage.

Highlights

Highlights of her international performances include featured appearances at the Colmar Festival in France, the Salzburg Palace Concert Series in Austria, BBC-TV in England, the Burell Collection in Glasgow, Scotland, and a tour with the KBS Orchestra in Korea.

She has also been a soloist under James Conlon at the Aspen Music Festival, and under Stanislaw Skrowaczewski at the Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall.

We hope that, the next time Min Kwon concertizes in the Philippines, she will perform with her equally gifted sister Yoon, an acclaimed violinist in her own right (they have done over 200 recitals to date). How about it, impressario Jomari Chan?

Turkey's pick for Oscars is yanked from cinemas

ANKARA, Turkey—The movie which was Turkey's hope for an Oscar has been ordered yanked from cinemas after police denounced the movie, which questions Turkey's ban on the Kurdish language,. as "separatist" propaganda.

Bloody police raid

The Culture Ministry, which had partly sponsored the making of "Big Man, Small Love," now has ordered the film out of theaters.

The police, in a report, also said the film offended police with a scene of killings in a bloody police raid on a Kurdish house, said a ministry official speaking on customary condition of anonymity.

The movie includes bits of dialogue in Kurdish with Turkish subtitles.

In the film, a 5-year-old Kurdish girl escapes a bloody police raid on the home of a relative sheltering Kurdish rebels. She ends up under the protection of a 75-year-old retired Turkish judge. The child cannot speak Turkish, and the authoritarian judge objects to the use of Kurdish in his home.

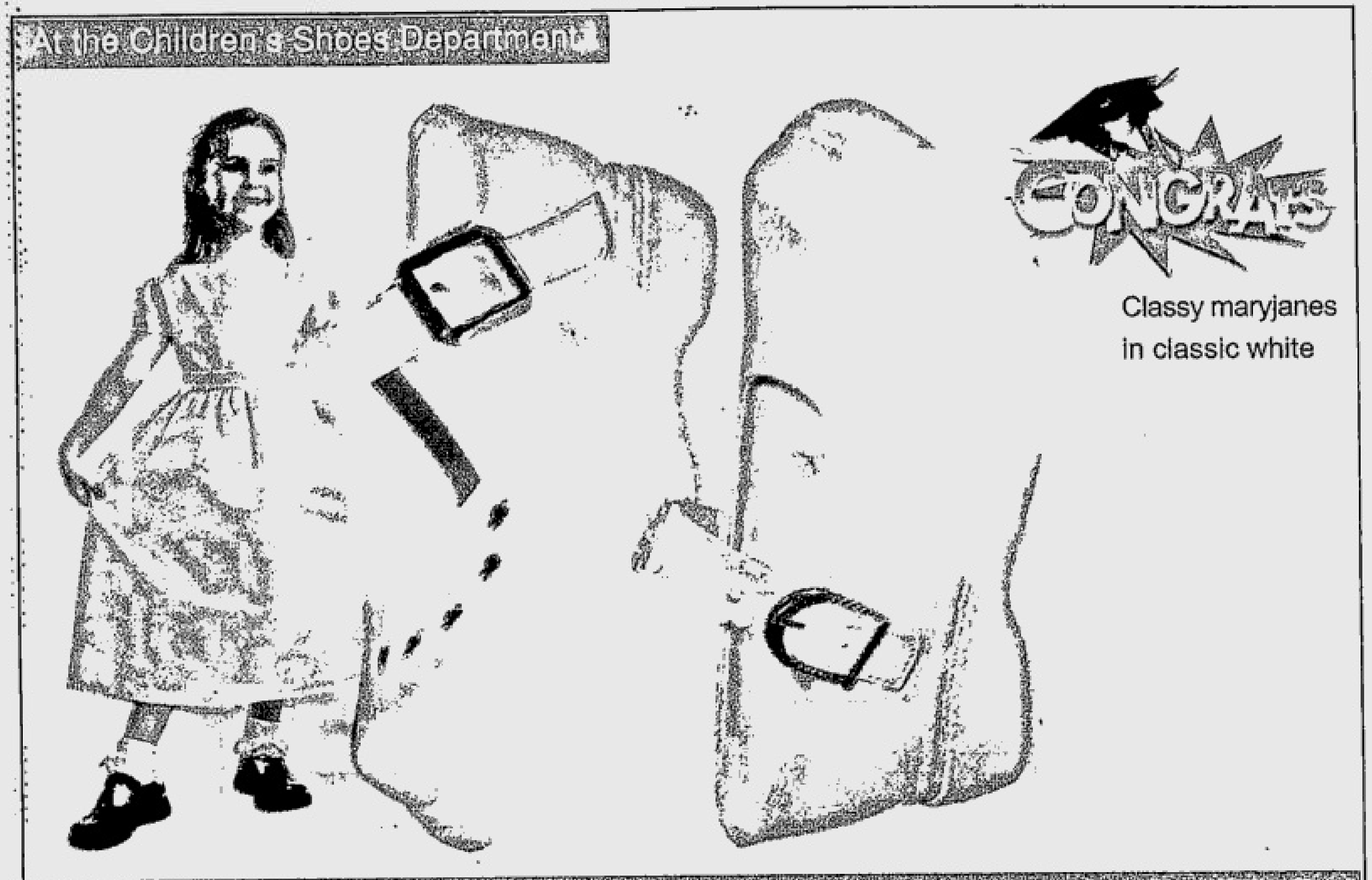
The movie about their tense relationship and the old man's gradual questioning of the strict, national ban on Kurdish, has won over moviegoers since it opened in cinemas in Turkey in October.

Candidate

Turkey had selected it as its candidate for a foreign film nomination, but the movie wasn't among those winning Oscar nominations last month.

The ban comes as Kurdish rebels, who fought a 15-year-war in the country's Kurdish-dominated southeast, and Kurdish activists increasingly demand optional Kurdish courses. **AP**

At the Children's Shoes Department



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WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Chess Munchkin Page 2
- Summer Camps Page 4
- YOU Kiddie Parade Page 5
- The Lunch Box Page 11

Destination: Space

Russians offer rich tourists a "spaced-out" kind of ride

EAGER to open up a space tourism market, a Russian aerospace company presented last week a mock-up "space plane" that would give an adventurer willing to pay nearly $100,000 the chance to experience three minutes in zero gravity on the edge of space.

About 100 people have already booked seats to fly on the Cosmopolis-XXI (C-21) suborbital plane, said Eric Anderson, president and CEO of Space Adventures, a US-based company working with Russia's private Suborbital Corporation on the project.

Space Adventures helped the first space tourist, Dennis Tito, realize his flight last year to the International Space Station atop a Russian Soyuz rocket—an eight-day trip for which Tito reportedly paid the Russian space agency $20 million.

The C-21, which planners say will be operational in three years, would offer a much briefer glimpse of the final frontier.

The craft, accommodating a pilot and two passengers, will be piggybacked on top of a carrier airplane to an altitude of 56,100 feet.

Zero-G

Once released from the carrier, the ship's own solid-fuel rocket engine will propel it to an altitude of just over 60 miles for three minutes in weightlessness.

Then the C-21 will slide back into the atmosphere and land like a conventional plane. The entire mission from takeoff to landing will take about an hour.

The International Space Station orbits at an altitude of about 250 miles, and the space shuttles' orbits usually range from 100 to 350 miles above the Earth.

Comfy Capsule

At an air base in Zhukovsky near Moscow that has served as Russia's top flight test center for decades, the C-21's designers presented their actual-size mock-up.

The ship is 7.6 meters long with a wingspan of 5.5 feet, and appeared less cramped inside than the claustrophobic Russian Soyuz space capsule.

"It's quite comfortable for the crew," Russian cosmonaut Valery Polyakov said after posing for cameras inside the mock-up. Polyakov holds the world's record for the longest space mission—438 days in 1994-1995.

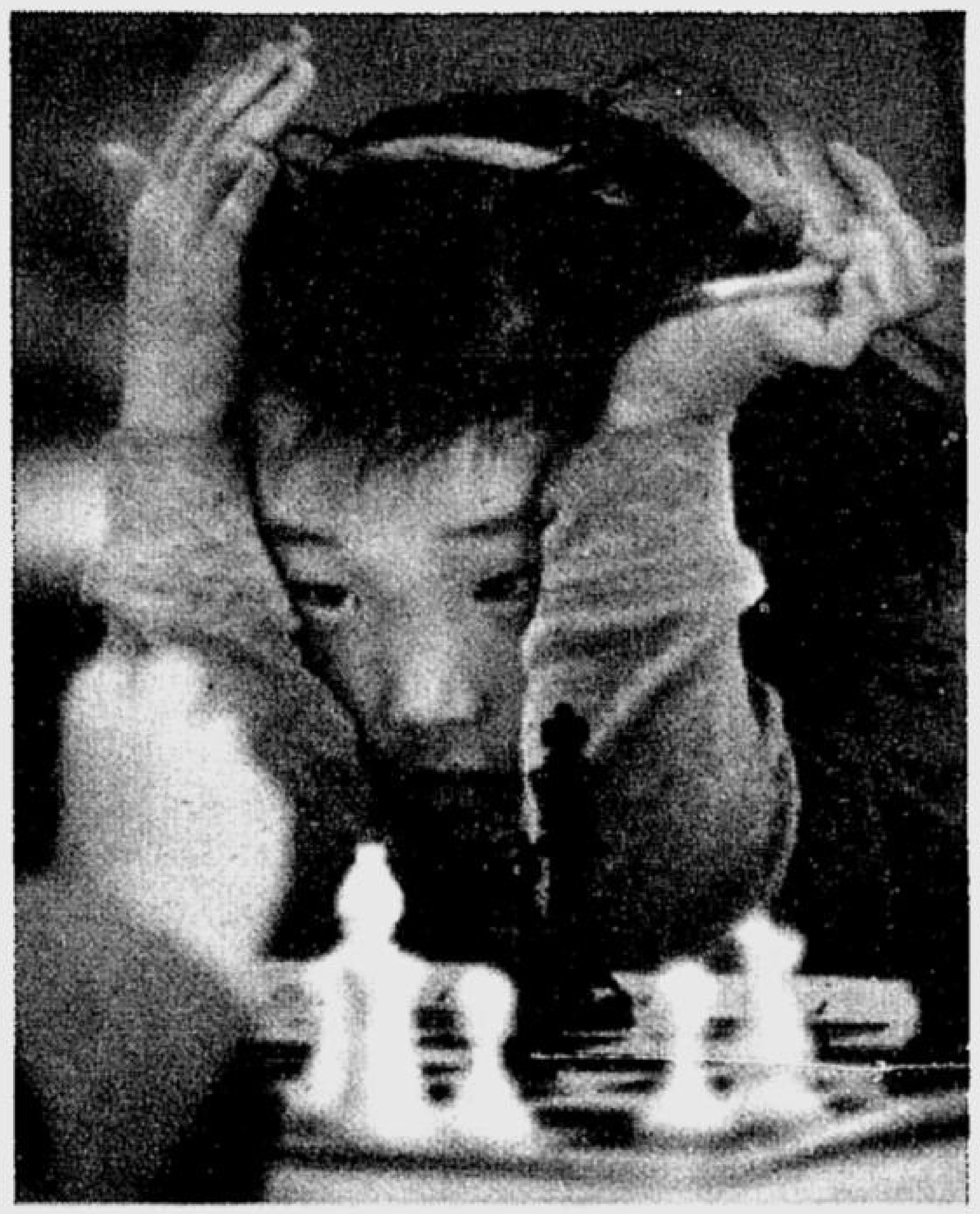
Space Training

The C-21 project's authors say their suborbital flier requires passengers to undergo only several days of training compared to many months of grueling preparation to space flights.

And despite the brief trip, they insist, it will be worth the hefty price—$98,000 per seat.

"A passenger will experience weightlessness and enjoy the view of the Earth

Destination/p.2



Chess Munchkin

SO young, yet so serious! Kindergarten student Elizabeth Skelton plays a game of chess during the 2002 Virginia Scholastic Chess Championships at William Fleming High School in Roanoke. Elizabeth, a student at Fishburn Park Elementary School, was playing Robert Brown of Lakeside Elementary School in Henrico County during their last game of the tournament. Skelton won. ***AP***

World Scope

Frankfurt, Germany
Rome, Italy
Burbank USA
Virginia, USA

Bells in Their Ears

A GERMAN court ordered a church near Frankfurt to ring its bells more softly or pay to sound-proof neighboring homes. The courts had found out—in response to an angry complaint—that the Protestant church in Aschaffenburg had built its bell tower 13 feet closer to the houses than allowed by the local authority. ***Reuters***

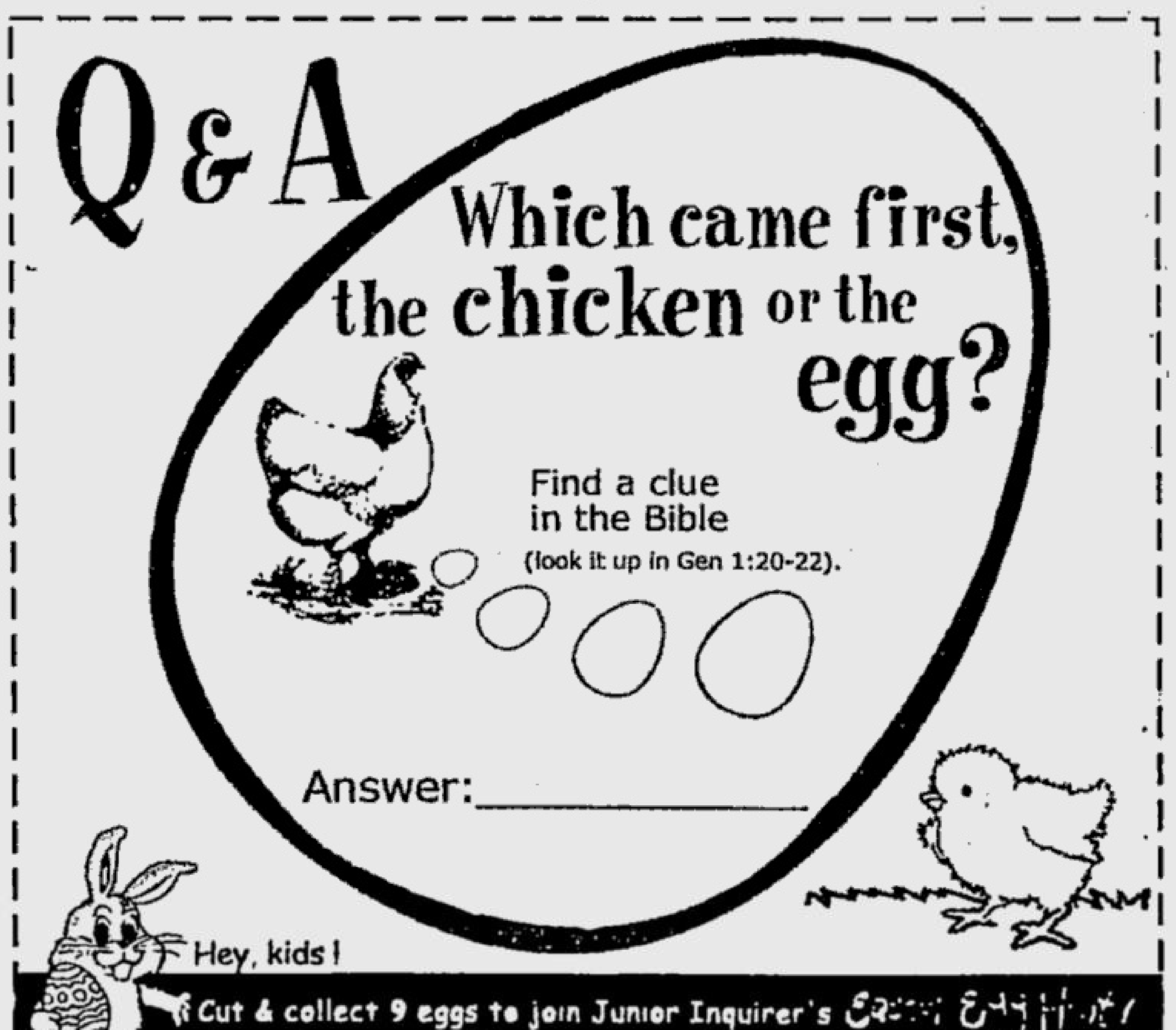
Disney Gal

THE BUZZ at Walt Disney Co. is that American figure skating star Michelle Kwan will soon become a spokesperson for the company. We don't know why yet. But Reuters say Kwan has already signed up a three-year contract with the kiddie entertainment company, based in Burbak, California. Kwan won the bronze medal at the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics. ***Reuters***

Telecoms Fair

WHOA! Germany is sure taking its cellphones, as well as other electronic gadgets, very seriously! Axel Kronberg, left, and Stefan Schmidt fix an oversized UMTS mobile phone by Motorola at the booth of the mobile phone company during preparations for the CeBIT computer fair at the exhibition center in Hanover. The world's largest fair for telecommunications and information technology opened its doors to the public from March 13 through 20. ***AP***

Q & A



Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Find a clue in the Bible (look it up in Gen 1:20-22).

Answer:____________

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[illegible]

Destination: Space (from page 1)

from space," said Valery Novikov, head designer at the Myasishchev Design Bureau, the aerospace firm developing the ship on order Space Adventures and Suborbital Corporation.

"It will be a grandiose experience," he said.

Safe

The craft relies on technologies developed for the Soviet Buran space shuttle, which was designed by Myasishchev and made a flawless unmanned maiden flight in 1988 before being scrapped for lack of funds.

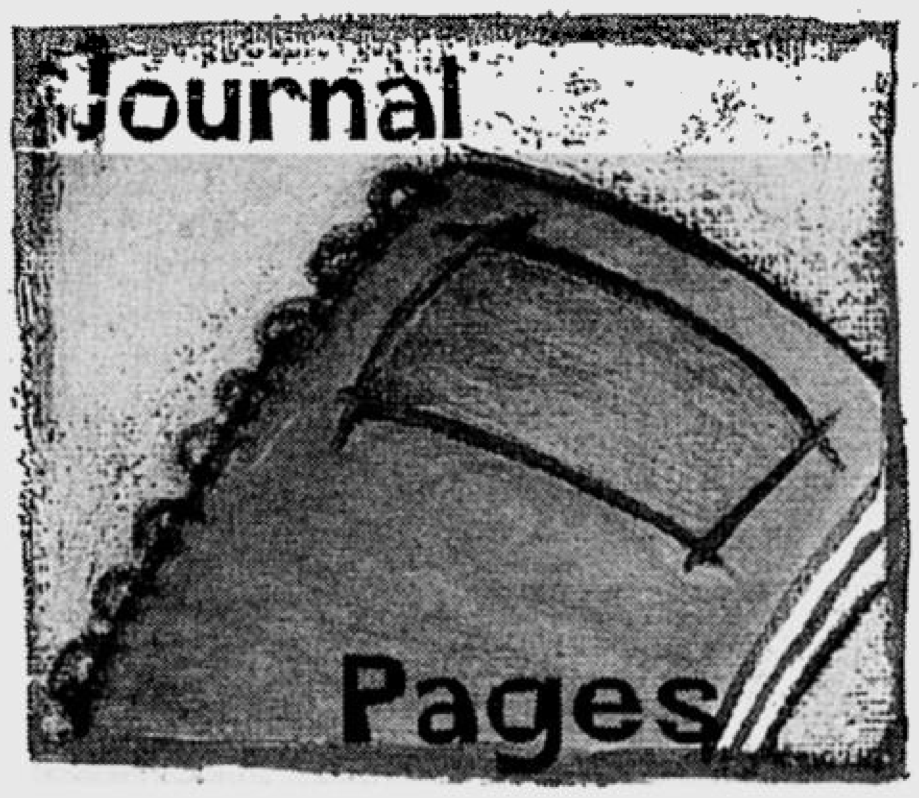
Space Adventures said in a statement that a recent study found the suborbital space tourist market could generate annual revenues of over $1 billion.

"After today, we'll have twice as many clients," Anderson said.

Novikov said the C-21 will use the engines of the same type as mounted on Russian ballistic missiles and have life-support and safety systems that have been extensively tested for the Buran. "We will guarantee full safety to passengers," Novikov said.

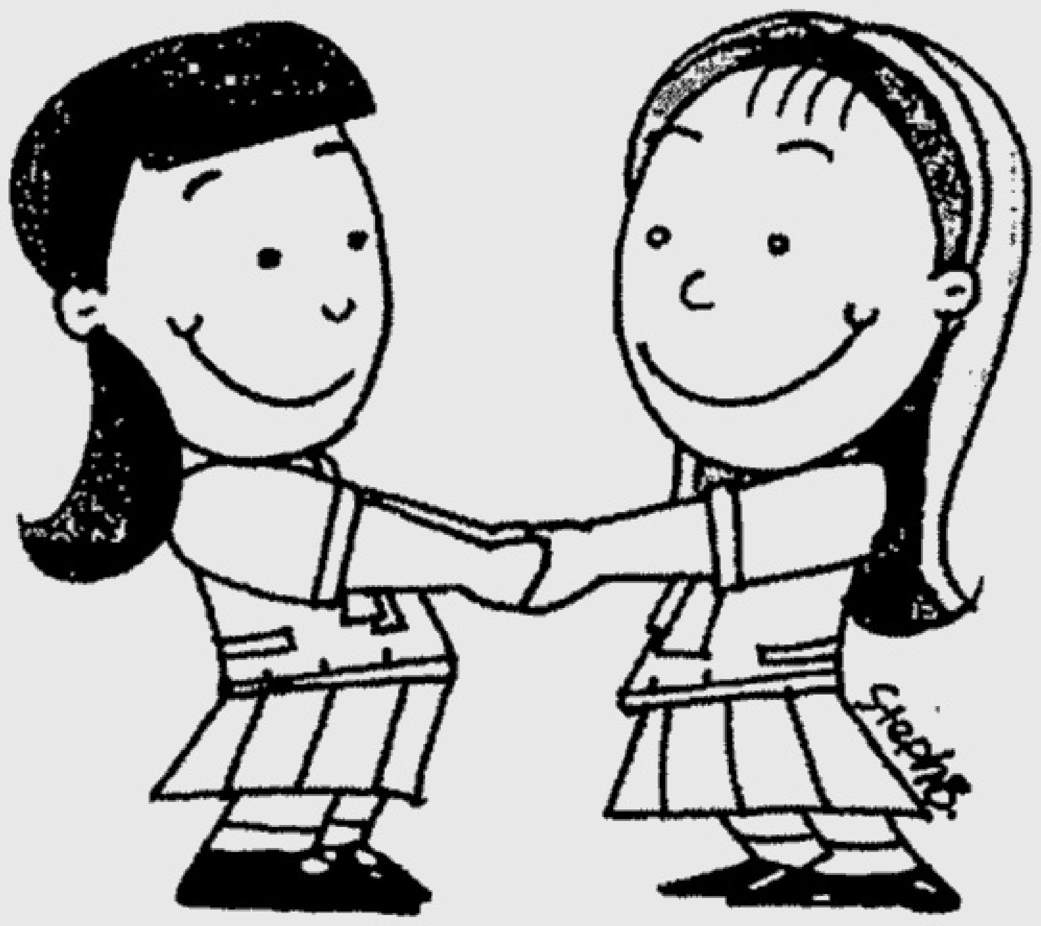
The ship will fly in an automatic mode but the pilot would be ready to

Destination/p.10



Good-bye Sisses!

By Anna Elvira S. Arcellana
Miriam College Grade School
Quezon City



TRIUMPHANT cheers, tearful good-byes, treasured moments and "sister bounding"—all these happened during the very meaningful and symbolic Turnover Ceremony of Grade 6 and 7 students of Miriam College Grade School.

It only seemed like yesterday when I was still a Grade 6 student, helping with preparations for the tribute to the Grade 7 students. Now, I couldn't believe it was my turn to say good-bye.

My favorite part of the occasion was when us Grade 7 students interacted with Grade 6 students who belonged to our former section. In an activity called "Memory Lane" we, the past 6-Dilaw students, reminisced all our victories, happy times and even the hard times. In turn, the present 6-Dilaw class shared their unforgettable experiences with us. We discovered that the two batches had a lot in common. It was a rewarding activity because we learned a lot from each other.

Later, during the very heart of the occasion, Grade 7 students—represented by the Student Council President Patricia Dy—turned over the leadership of the grade school to the Grade 6 students. This meant they would serve as the leaders of the grade school community next year and are expected to be good role models to their schoolmates in the lower grades.

We felt truly inspired to fly high and work hard to reach our goals and dreams in life when the Grade 6 students serenaded us with "Live your Dream." In turn, we sang "Think of Me."

The program ended with the Candle Ceremony, where we all stood in cloverleaf formation in the dark school field. The place was lighted by the candles the students were holding. Here, the Grade 6 students gave us. And there, we sang our favorite sentimental songs—"Thank You," and "Candle on the Water."

As I stared at the candle flame, I thought of the people that I'd be leaving behind—people who served as a light in my life—who guided me through my struggles. Now it was time to say good-bye. It was time to do things on my own—how was I supposed to manage without them?

But then, I realized that just by thinking about them—all of the things they've done for me, their encouragement, and advice—I would never lose hope and I would become the person God wants me to be. I'll never forget the day when they urged us to move on, leaving these last words: "Soar High Batch 2002 Graduates!"

Straight from JI Readers

You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!

Britney Invades JI?

DEAR Editor,

I'VE been a fan of JI for as long as I can remember. I'm also a huge fan of Harry Potter, but that doesn't make me a nerd. It's cool to read books, and I think everyone should. Anyway, I also like anime, how come I don't see many articles about it anymore? It's not that I mind but I just wanted to know. And I have a suggestion, why don't you put up a section for news on pop stars such as Britney Spears, Aaron Carter, N'sync and all the others, that way you will be able to catch the attention of not only children but also teens. By the way, I'm hoping to get into my school newspaper as a journalist, can you give me some useful advice? Thanks for your time, continue making kids everywhere smile, and God bless all of you!—**LORINA TAN**, 13, St. Jude Catholic School

Dear Lorina,

Hi! Thanks for your letter. The reason why we haven't had any anime features is that there's so much more to feature out there than just anime. After all, JI is not an anime magazine. As for Britney Spears and teen readers, the JI staff is at the mercy of quirky, anime-loving grade school kids—not teens. For teen stuff, check out the INQUIRER*'s 2bU section. Good luck on your quest to become a campus journalist. The best advice I can give you is to read a lot and write a lot. What? That's all? Yup, that's all!—**The Editor***

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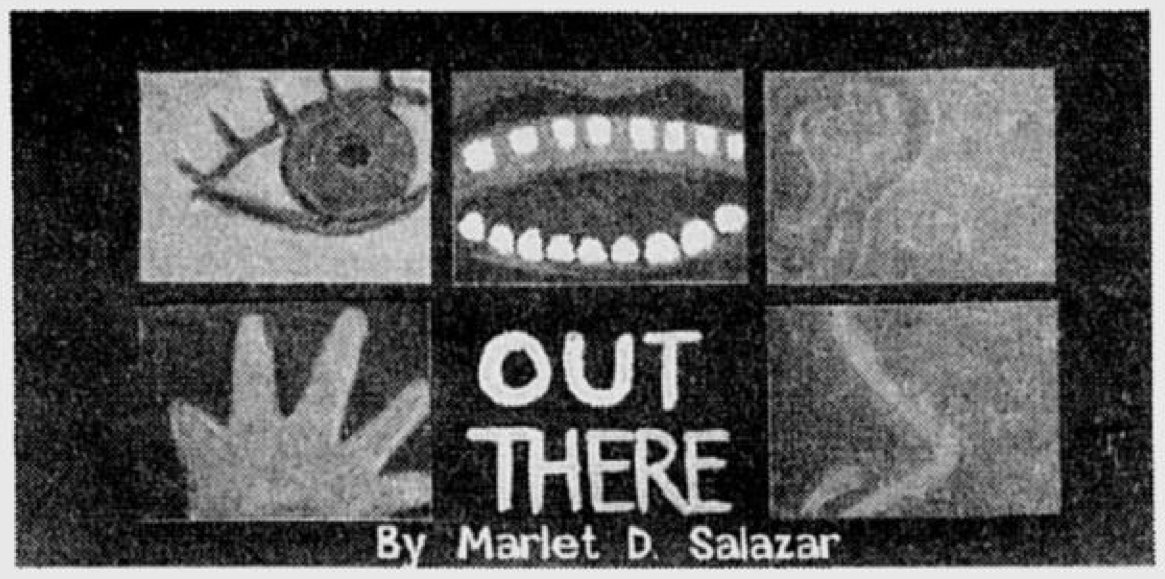


OUT THERE

By Marlet D. Salazar

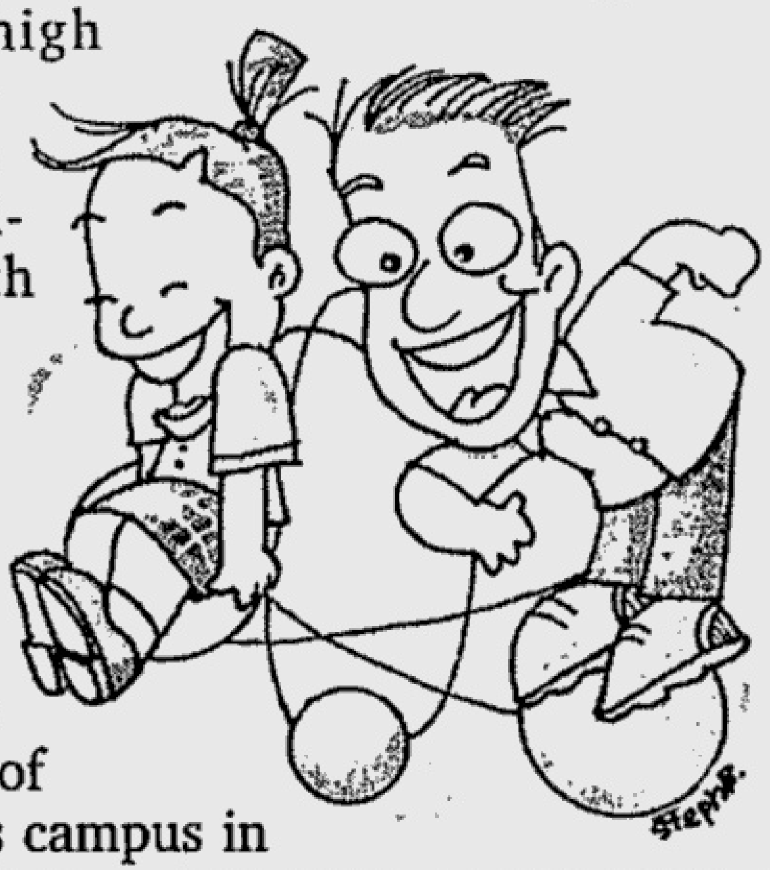
Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Camps

CAMPLIKASAN. Haribon Foundation invites interested kids ages 7-12 years old to join this year's "Camplikasan" to be held at Biak na Bato National Park, San Miguel, Bulacan on April 6-8. Experience the fun of bird watching, nature walks, hiking, cook-outs, fishing, and caving. For more information call up Grace Marasigan at 434-8237 or 925-3332.

SNACK AGAIN. Join the Snack (Summer Nature and Arts Camp for Kids) annual camp-out on April 8-13 at Taal Lake Yacht Club, Talisay, Batangas. Outdoor activities include sailing and kayaking, mountaineering, pottery, photography, gymnastics, archery, a visit to a plant nursery, acting, taebo exercises, taekwondo and tide dyeing plus lessons on environmental impact and the Lubid teambuilding adventure games. To register call up 721-0801, 724-1762, 726-7164.

SCIENCE CAMP. The Philippine Society of Youth and Science Clubs Inc. is inviting all interested high school students to join the 2002 National Youth Science Technology and Environmental Summer Camp on April 10-16. It will be held at the University of the Philippines campus in Quezon City. Call up 920-8174 or 920-9561 or send an email to psysc@vasia.com.



Workshops

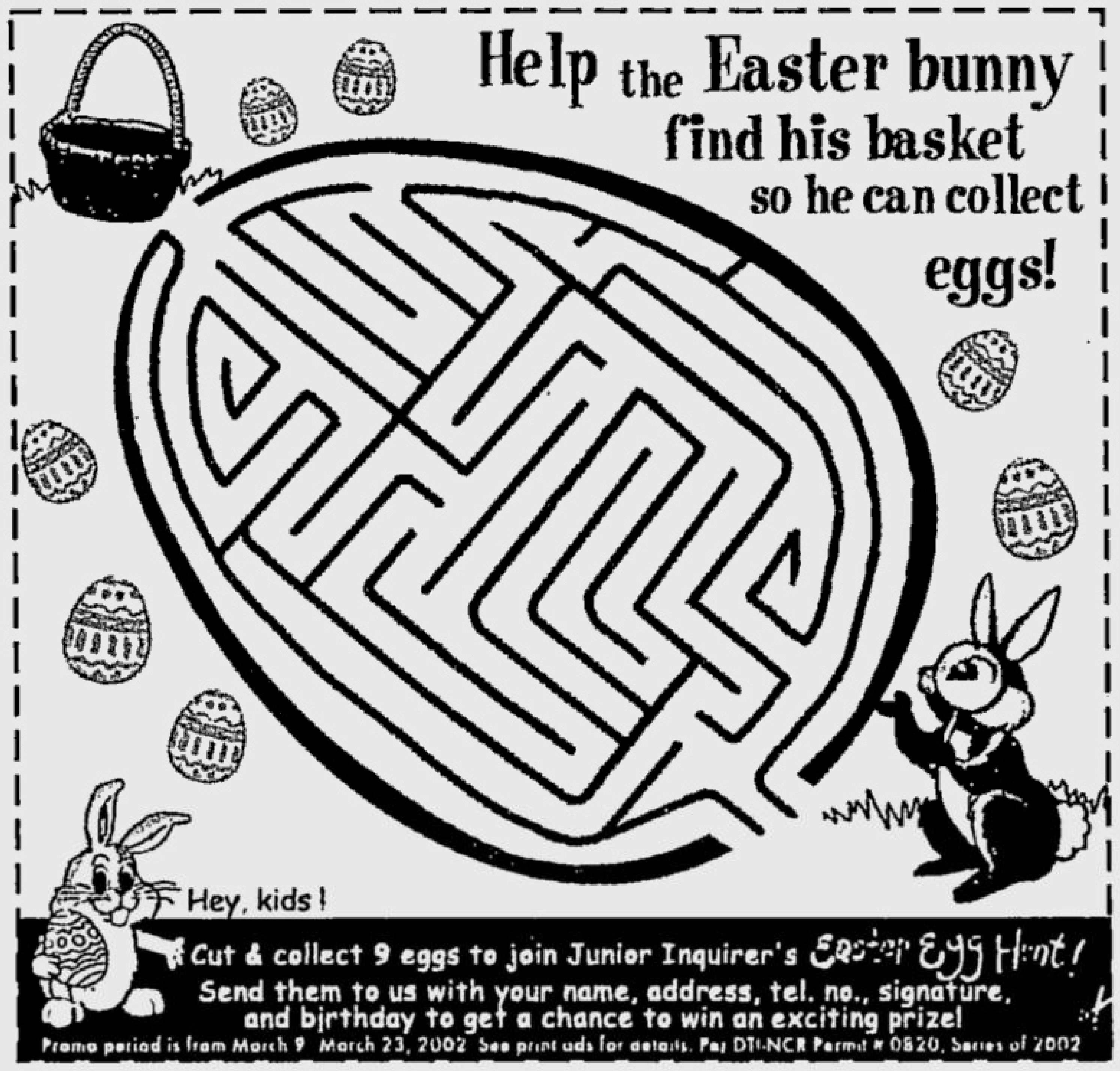
STORY WRITING. Join the RCBC Kuwentong Kalikasan Katha ng Kabataan free short story writing workshop. Among the facilitators are children's book authors Rene Villanueva and Carla Pacis. For more details call up 894-9000 local 2711, 9497 or 3344. The free workshop lasts until April 12.

READING ADVENTURE. R.E.A.D. at PsychPros invites kids to experience literature the fun way. The Summer Reading Adventure workshop is open to kids ages 6-13 years old. It will be held from April 9 to May 11 at the 3rd floor President Tower Bldg., 81 Timog Ave., Quezon City. For inquiries call up 928-0878, 926-6519.

EARTH DAY ARTS. Join the Color of the Wind Art Workshop and have your artworks entered in a contest in celebration of Earth Day. Eli Africa, visual artist and professor at University of the Philippines and St. Benilde, will conduct the eight-session workshop. It will be held at the grounds of Miriam College and starts on March 31. For inquiries call up 633-7192.

SUMMER FESTIVAL. It's never too early to plan for summer. Here are Ayala Museum Escuela sa Museo's lineup of activities: Basic Drawing, April 6-May 25; Beginner's Pastel, April 10-May 8; Basic Arts and Crafts for 4-6 year olds, April 10-May 8; Beginner's Oil Painting, April 11-May 7, Mixed Media, April 11-May 7; and Digital Art, April 13-May 18. Please contact Christy Monastrial at 810-8407.

LET'S DANCE. If you love to dance enroll at Dansa Studio summer dance workshop which starts on April 1. Classes offered are jazz, streetdance, ballroom, ballet, cheerdance. Plus they also offer taekwondo, aerobics, acting, and arts and crafts. Visit their office at the 4th floor, Manna II Bldg., 33 V. Luna Ave., Brgy. Pinyahan, Quezon City. Call them at 436-6175 or 0917-9868822.

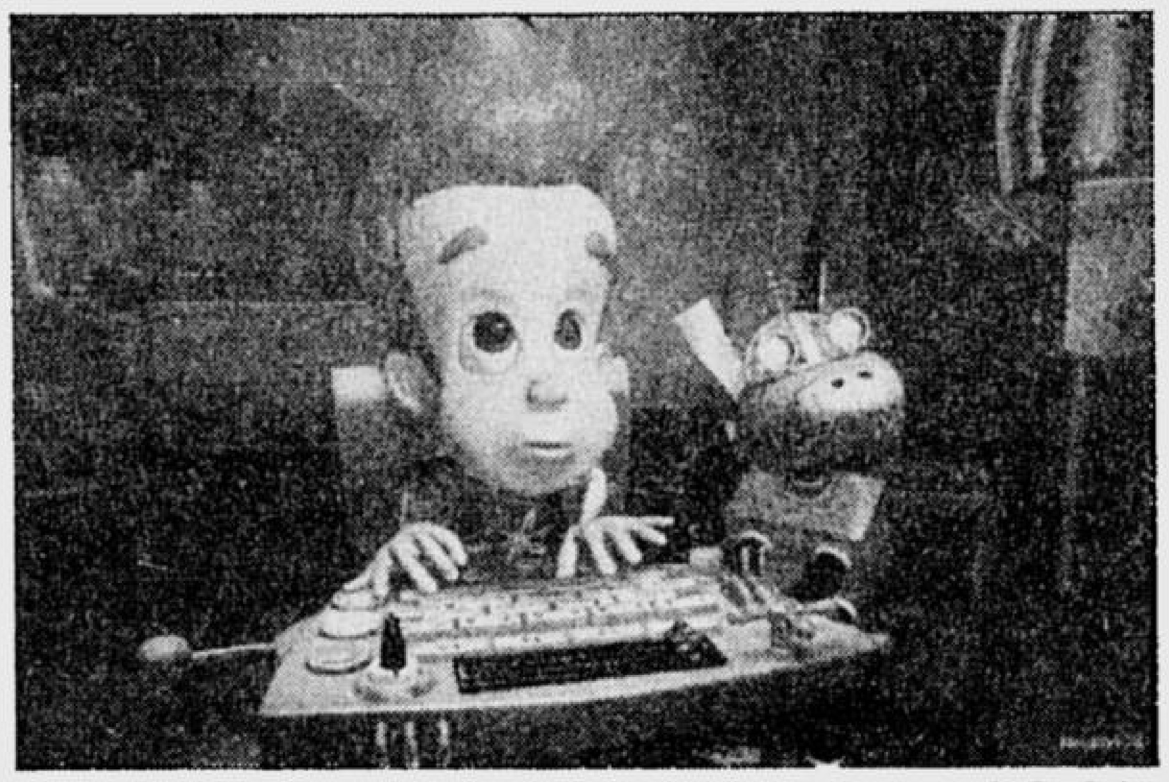

Help the Easter bunny find his basket so he can collect eggs!
Hey, kids!

Cut & collect 9 eggs to join Junior Inquirer's Easter Egg Hunt! Send them to us with your name, address, tel. no., signature, and birthday to get a chance to win an exciting prize!

Promo period is from March 9 March 23, 2002 See print ads for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0820, Series of 2002

Movie

BOY GENIUS. He's your typical small town boy--he invents gadgets as a hobby; rescues his parents from aliens; saves the earth from invasion. What? Yep, that's "Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius." Well, maybe he does stuff not that ordinary for a boy but sure he's having fun with his friends too. Don't miss Jimmy's adventures, "Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius" is now showing in Metro Manila theaters.



BEST BUDDIES. Jimmy together with his invention (and friend,) Goddard the dog, takes you into their space adventures.

Cable Picks

SPY FRED. Far from his job in the rock quarry, Fred takes on a challenging job: an American spy. "A Man Called Flinstone" airs on March 29 at 8 p.m. on Cartoon Network.

LOONEY TUNES EASTER. The super hilarious Looney Tunes stars are set to take charge of the festive celebrations on Cartoon Network this Easter. Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Elmer Fudd, Sylvester and Yosemite Sam are together for four days of Easter preparing delivery of a two-hour daily "Looney Tunes Easter" eggstravaganza. Don't miss it from March 29 to April 1.

UNDERWATER IMAGES. Don't miss National Geographic Channel's "Shape of Life," a series about uncovering human origins and how technology helped in making the series. It also offers stunning visual imagery that uses the latest in underwater imagery. That's every Tuesday of April at 9 p.m.

EASTER ON VATICAN. Learn more about the Vatican on National Geographic Channel's Easter Special on March 30 at 8 p.m. Vatican City is the smallest nation in the world and is also the treasure trove of magnificent art, manuscripts and historical documents. Narrated by Hollywood actor Martin Sheen, "Inside the Vatican" will provide a rare glimpse of the city and the thriving community that exists within its walls.

YOU to hold kiddie parade

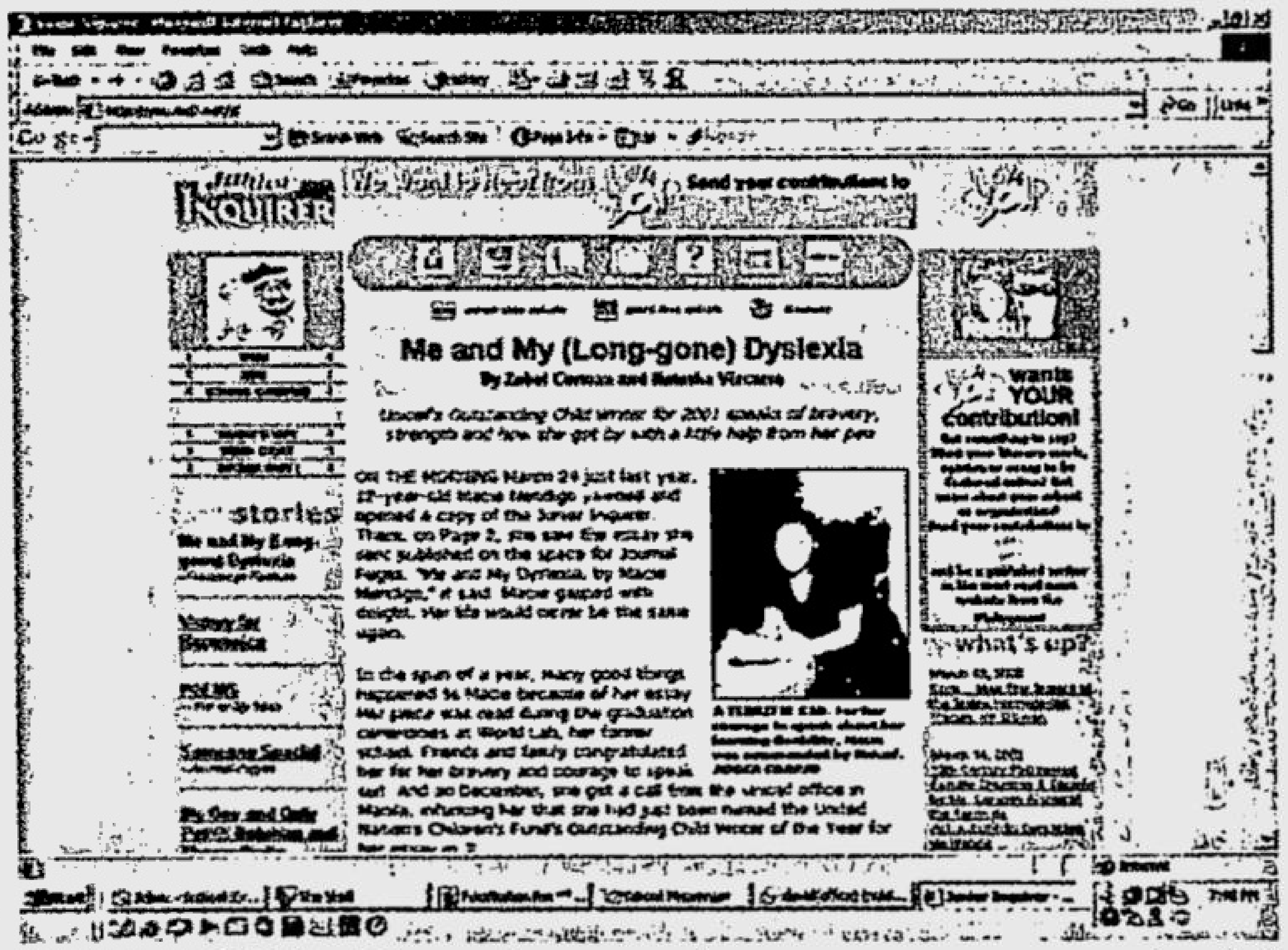
JUGGLERS. Mimes. Stilt-walkers.

No, the circus hasn't come to town. These are just some of the performers at a special kiddie parade at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati. All this is part of the fun during the day-long celebration of the YOU launch on April 6, Saturday.

YOU is INQ7.net's website for the youth at http://you.inq7.net. The site offers the online JUNIOR INQUIRER section at http://you.inq7.net/ji/ for young readers like you.

Think of YOU's JI section as a community that you are creating over the Internet, allowing you to share your thoughts with friends and family—and to make new friends.

On April 6, you and your friends can enjoy the free children's show at the Glorietta Activity Center. YOU, in cooperation with the Philippine Daily Inqui-rer's JUNIOR INQUIRER, is kicking off the celebration with a morning filled with fun and games.



Me and My (Long-gone) Dyslexia

NEW LOOK. JI's webpage gives you a more colorful peek on YOUr world.

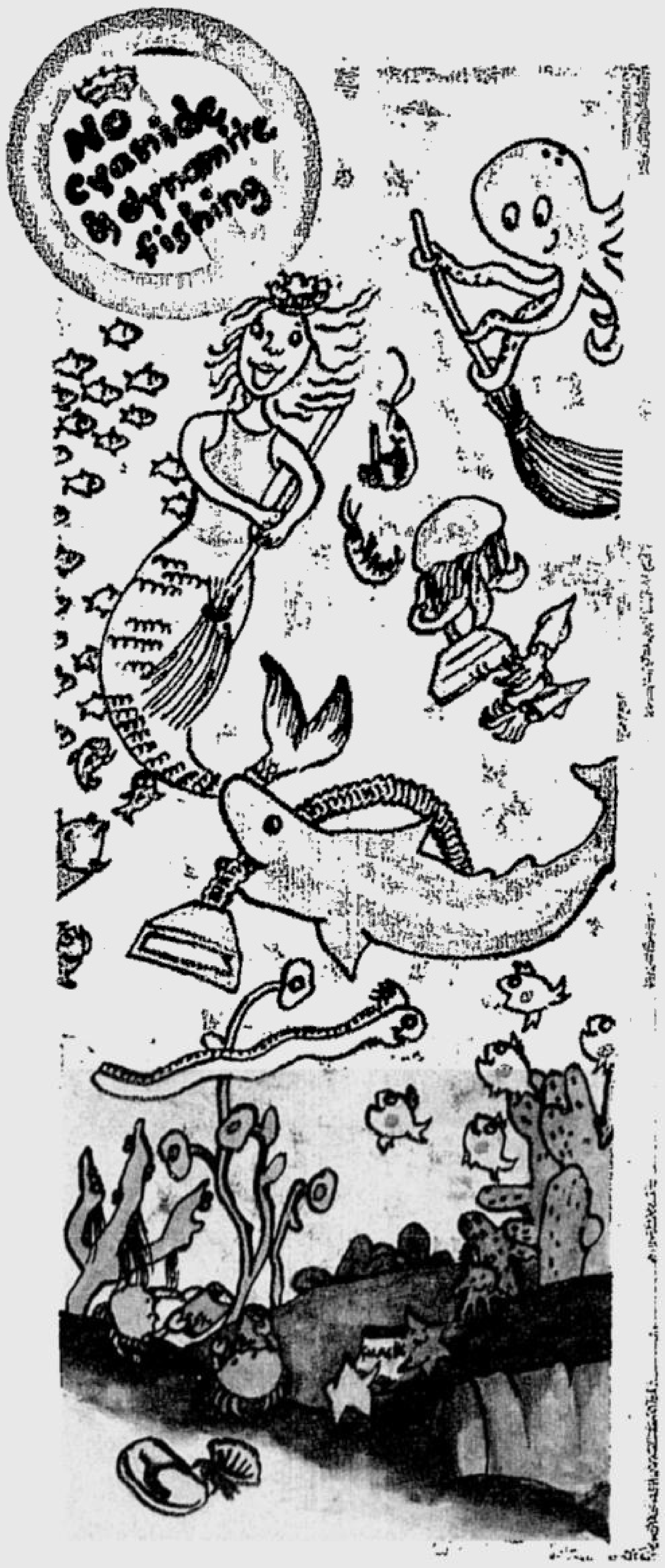
The festivities will start at 11 a.m. at the Glorietta 4 entrance with the kiddie parade. The parade will make its way around the Glorietta Activity Center, after which the performers will take centerstage. Laugh at the antics of the clowns, and marvel at the feats of the jugglers.

So, kids, why not join the parade and enjoy the show? This is a day of fun you shouldn't miss. Ask mom and dad to take you to the Glorietta Activity Center on April 6, invite your friends and classmates, and take part in the celebration.

Don't forget: this parade is for YOU.

ISLAND SUMMER presents Barbie™
Cool Inflatable Gear Collection
Kiddie Goggles
Summer Carry-alls
Kiddie Swimsuits and Tankinis
We've got it all for you!
SM DEPARTMENT STORE
Barbie Cool Cabana Summer Promo
FREE Inflatable Keychain for a P300 minimum single receipt purchase of Barbie items
Promo Period: March 4-31
At the Character Shop
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0662 Series of 2002
QUIAPO • MAKATI • CUBAO • HARRISON • NORTH EDSA • STA. MESA • ORTIGAS • LAS PINAS • BACOOR • FAIRVIEW • MANILA • PAMPANGA • ILOILO • CEBU • DAVAO

Princess of the



By Ana Abundo
International School Manila
Illustrations by Christine Sipin

JUANITA was having a nightmare. It was about the fishes. She was playing with her friends, and then all of a sudden there was a very big explosion. That was when she realized that the sound was from the trumpet of a messenger.

"An order from the king. All his children are summoned to his side." The message said.

"Whaa?' Juanita asked sleepily.

"I'll only repeat this once: the king—your father—wants to see you. All his children are to come, meaning Jose, you, and Lourdes. NOW!" he boomed.

As soon as Jose, Juanita, and Lourdes arrived at the king's place, His Royal Majesty cleared his throat.

"Lourdes and Jose are to become king and queen. And Juanita is going to be the person who makes trips to the land."

"But how? I have fins, not legs!"

"Whenever a mermaid comes up to land, she becomes a human with human legs."

A FEW days later, the king passed away. The siblings were sad for a while but eventually adjusted to their father's death. Soon after that, Lourdes and Jose ruled Mermay.

One afternoon, Juanita had to go and make plans for the land mission. She was to go and convince the mayor to clean the reefs. She always heard snippets of the plan when she was little and now, she knew exactly what to do.

She had a plan called "How to save the coral reefs" and she was always making up strategies. As she swam, a sudden explosion stunned Juanita. She woke up 10 minutes later to the sound of some humans yelling, "Look! There's a girl out on the beach!"

THE BOY who found her was from the Javier family. Juanita lived with the Javier family who took her in as their daughter. She lived a happy life. Juanita forgot about her life in Mermay, and quickly adapted to life in the village.

Nine years later. . .

". . .Presenting Ms Isabela Juanita Javier, Mayor of Mermaid City. Founder of Save the Coral Reefs. . ." said the spokesperson. Thanks to her contribution to STCR, she has helped prevent dynamite and cyanide fishing." The spokesperson handed over the microphone over to a lady dressed all in white.

"Hello everyone! I'm very glad to be here. Folks, I have a very important story to tell. Please listen very well. I have heard everywhere that our coral reefs were in bad shape. I felt the only way to really find out what was wrong was to go diving and see it up close.

"So, I swam around for a while and

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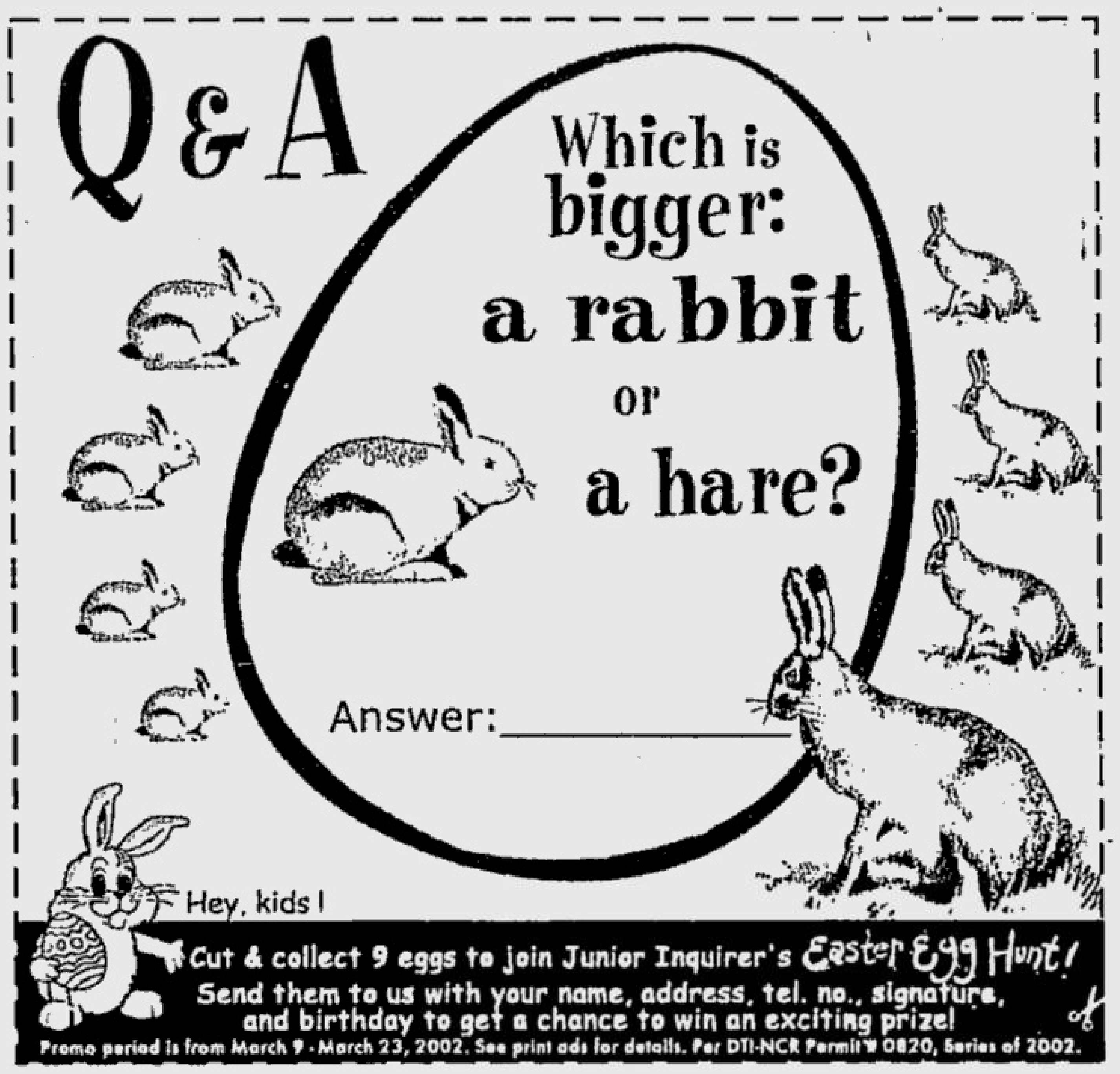

Q&A

Which is bigger: a rabbit or a hare?

Answer:______________

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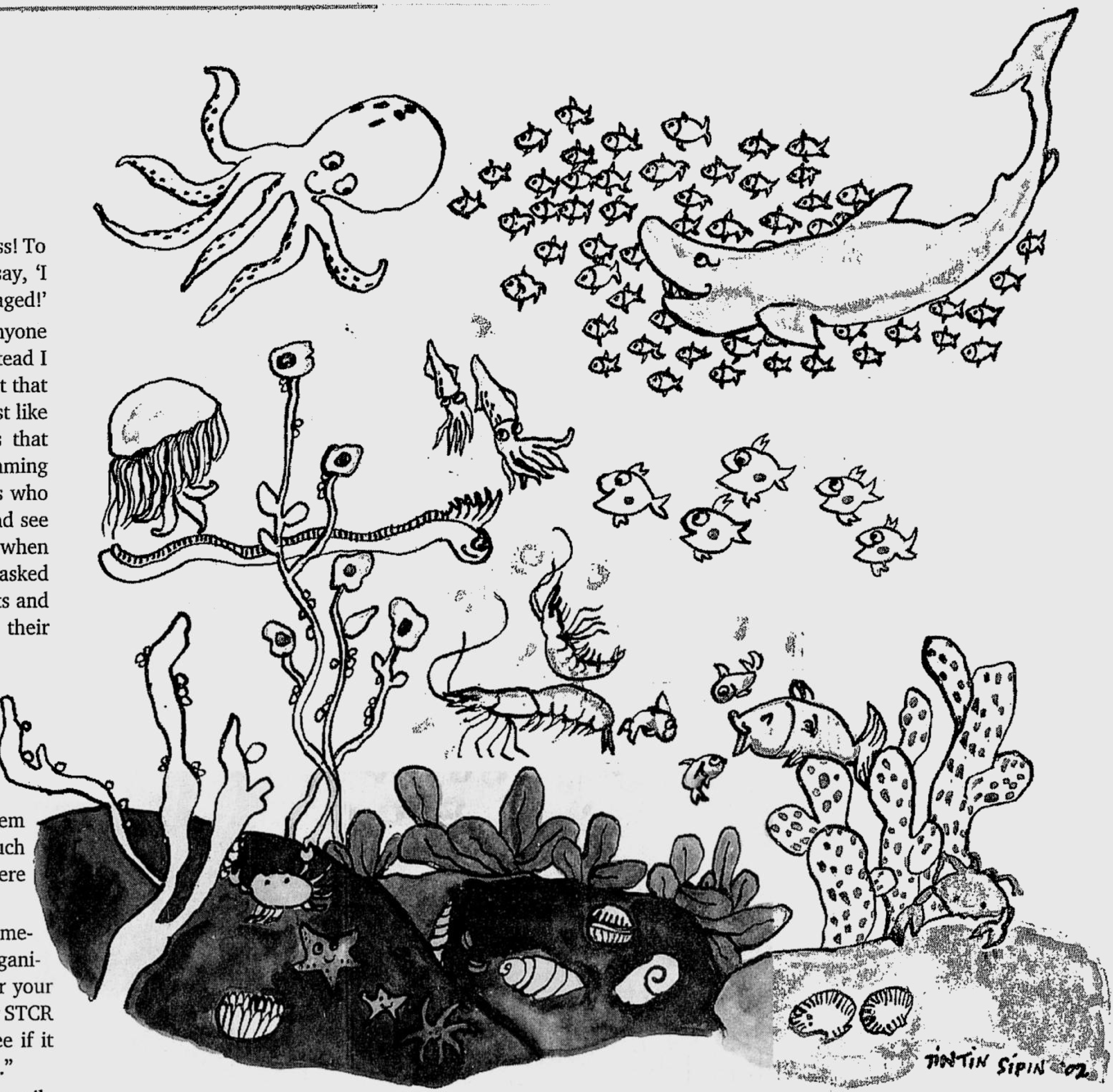
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Sea



ıdmit that it was a big mess! To prise, I heard someone say, 'I ʼhy the coral reef is damaged!'

rned around to check if anyone ere following me, but instead I gger surprise. I found out that had turned into fins! Just like s! Another surprise was that ʼere a lot of fishes swimming me! They were the ones who o me! I decided to go and see d talk to them too, and when they understood me! I asked hat were their complaints and id men were invading their

n they described what ermen were doing, it ıctly how cyanide fish-lone! And I was even. ıocked when they told re were only 89 of them at's just about how much catch in a week! They were erate need of help!

d I was going to do some-bout it so I started an organi-o save the reefs. Just for your tion, our new project for STCR rine reserve. We will see if it s the number of fishes."

inished with a very big smile ked too big for her little face.

ediately, the whole city got on the reserve. Some people it was pure nonsense. They ıde a bargain, saying that if the not increase three times as s they were catching, cyanide ıamite fishing would be al-ıgain.

ARS later, the population of the fishes increased. By then, the city's tourism had improved. A lot of other cities that cared for their coral reefs followed Mermay's way of saving the ocean. Eveveryone was happy, especially the people of Mermay, and their new friends, the people of the village, Juanita and her villagers became very famous. Juanita passed away when she was 89 years old. Before she died, she left a note to everyone in the world.

It said:

To everyone who reads this,

Thank you for helping Mother Earth. I am very glad that slowly, we are helping the reefs. All the fishes and mermaids want to thank you for helping them increase. Our earth would not be a healthy place without people like you! Keep it up! Save the planet! Thanks!

Yours truly,

Princess Juanita Isabela Santos Javier, Princess of the Sea

***Ana** is a Grade 5 student at International School Manila. Ana's favorite thing to do is read. She says that when you like to read, you will probably like to write too. Among the things she enjoys are playing with her dogs, feeding a parrot, watching her hamster, and watching videotapes.*

***Christine** is a member of Ang Ilustrador ng Kabataan.*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

On her own

Tamil, 13, perfects her flute playing atop misty Mt. Makiling

By Eline Santos

"GALENG!"

Tamil won 1st place in the 2001 National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA) Woodwinds division and is a consistent honor student too.

IMAGINE living away from your Ma and Pa at 13 years old. Crystal Milarose Rodis, or Tamil, studies at the Philippine High School for the Arts way up on Mt. Makiling. Every school day, she goes home to the school dorm—where some of her classmates also stay—instead of her family's house in Ayala, Alabang.

"I get homesick," she says. "But it's okay because I get to go home to my family every weekend."

Friends say she's...

Obsessed. That's how people describe Tamil's love affair with musicals. "I memorize the musicals by heart," Tamil says.

When she got the chance to watch "Les Miserables" and "Phantom of the Opera" in New York (Broadway for real!), Tamil made herself a promise: "I will not yawn... I will not cry... I will not blink."

"How can I afford to blink? *Sayang 'yung* one second!" she exclaims. When "Miss Saigon" was showing in Manila, she watched it three times.

Hiraman ng bayan

Her extensive collection has made Tamil the unofficial library of CDs at school.

"When it's exam time, the CD rack is empty," she says.

That's because learning how to sing is part of their curriculum. And since Tamil and her classmates take art very seriously, the Broadway pieces are borrowed by those taking up classes in Voice.

Math, science and other academic subjects are taken up from 7 am to 12:50 p.m. Afternoons are reserved for their field of specialty.

Broadway Dream

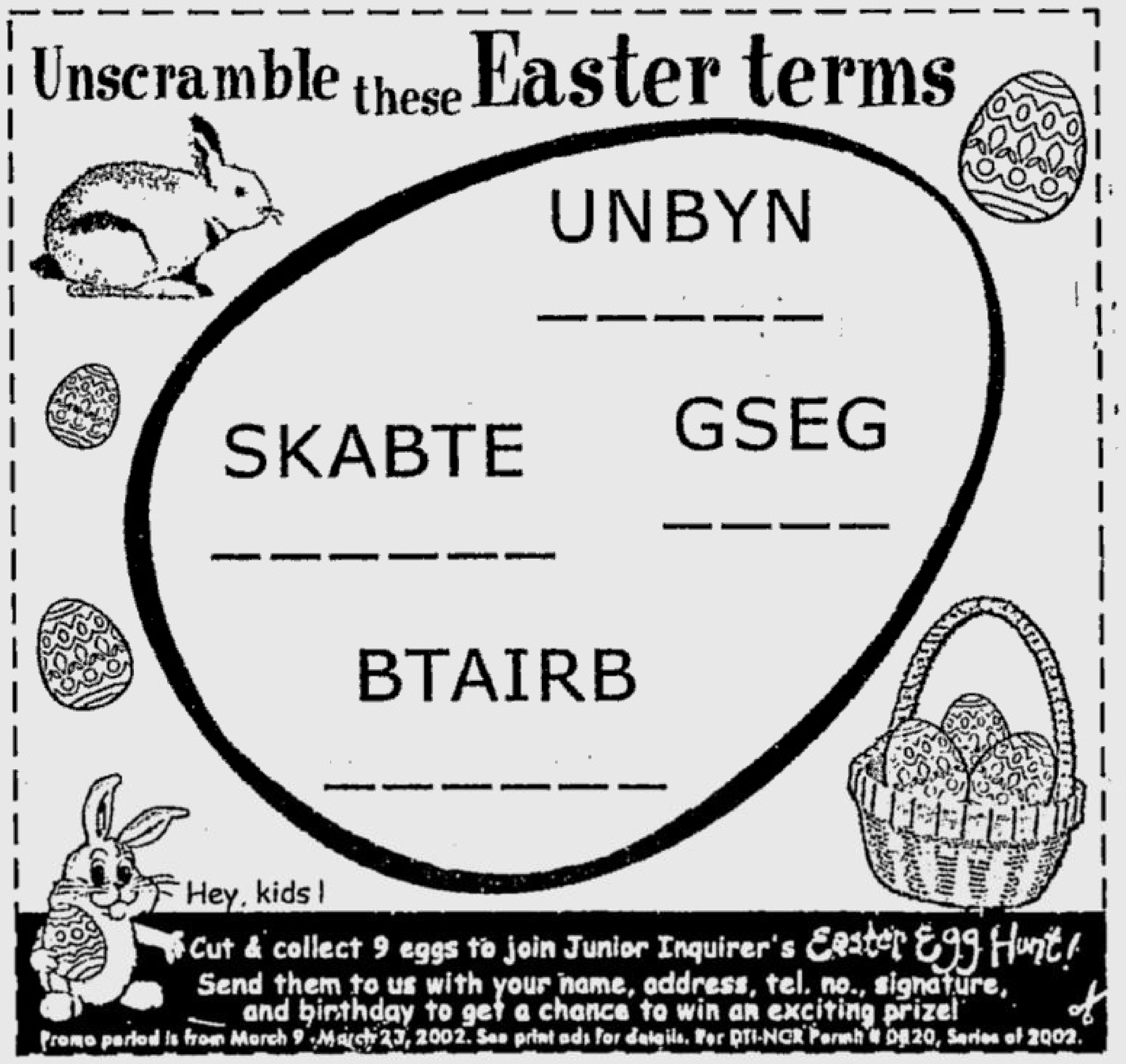
Tamil can play the piano, organ, and the octavina, a 14-string instrument usually played in rondallas. But Tamil's specialization is playing the flute. She practices at least three hours a day.

"I made a commitment already," she explains. But her dream performance is to play in the orchestra pit of a Broadway musical.

Tamil says that "Phantom of the Opera" has the best flute parts although, "'Beauty and the Beast' has good flute parts, too."

If her obsessive passion is any indication, Tamil's love affair with music will go on and on. . .played not on a solo saxophone, but on a beloved flute.

Unscramble these Easter terms



UNBYN

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SKABTE

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

GSEG

_ _ _ _

BTAIRB

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

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R'RRIFIC

'Rrifickidsaresmart
'Rrifickidsarefun
Somearen'tinthehonorslist
Butgettheirhomeworkdone
Somehowtheworld's
abetterplace
Iknowthismuchistrue
Hey'Rrifickid!
Weknowyou'rethere
Weloveyou'causeyou'reyou!

If you think you're 'Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a **free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!**

Kid 'r'rrific

nomination form

I nominate: ____________________

Age: ____________________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

____

She/he lives at ____________________

and studies at ____________________

Her/his contact number is: ____________________

Sender's Name: ____________________

Sender's Age & School: ____________________

Sender's Address: ____________________

Sender's Contact No. ____________________

Bits on Adopting an Alien

A movie review on "E.T. The Extra Terrestrial" released 20 years after

By Louella E. Yu
JI Correspondent
Immaculate Conception Academy

DO YOU keep a bag of M & M's at home? Well, you should because the biggest tip that you can get out of this movie is: You can lure extraterrestrials with M&M's.

Huh?! Yeah, yeah I know. I'm not even sure if they were M&M's but they sure didn't melt in E.T.'s hands. Double Huh!?

Okay, okay, I'll get to the point. Last Saturday, I watched the Philippine premiere of the new re-released, re-edited and enhanced-with-surround-sound movie, "E.T." "E.T.", as the movie is called, is all about this alien being accidentally left on earth to fend for him. . . her, err . . . itself. It finds itself "adopted" by this boy named Elliot who lures it into the house with. . .yeah, M&M's.

At first, he doesn't want to tell his siblings unless they make the best promise they can make not to tell a single soul. Soon, the whole family—save for the mum—knows about E.T. and treats it like their own. They were fine, E.T. gets accustomed to Elliot and his family's lifestyle and in the process, finds a way to "call home."

Then, the government agents find out. As always, they want to get their hands on the "specie from the other planet" but of course, Elliot won't allow that. So, as soon as E.T.'s device was ready, Elliot and E.T. went up into the woods to "phone home."

Sure, everything goes fine aside from the fact that Elliot has been considering missing by his mom and even though he came back, he left E.T. in the woods.

Now, this is a lesson to be learned by everyone, if you are going to attempt to adopt an alien, do not—I repeat—do not leave him alone in the woods where there are sewers. Why, you ask? Because sewers are polluted and in this movie, E.T. is polluted by sewer-water as he tried to go alien-swimming.

Anyway, E.T. is brought back on the verge of death by Elliot's older brother. The whole family is gathered in the bathroom trying to figure out what to do and well, the mom sort of freaks out (trust me, your mom would too if you decided to be host to an extra-terrestrial) and brings everyone downstairs.

FRIENDLY ALIEN. Young Drew Barrymore gives E.T. a peck on the face.

But alas! Their house has been invaded by weirdly suited government agents who claim to be well, I don't know what the word is, but think M.I.B and Ghostbusters. Sense much trouble? Good. I'll stop here.

Thought I'd leave you hanging? Well, the rest is for me to know and for you to find out. This is a movie review dudes, not the story-telling section! "E.T." was definitely not boring and is most definitely worthy of being called a classic. Although personally, I prefer "Star Wars" as an alien flick, "E.T." is so worth your time watching.

Beware though, if you're more of a furry-creature-loving kind of person and you don't think E.T. is cute, prepare for the hugging scenes. . .(do I hear any "eew's" out there?).

By the way, Drew Barrymore (Yes, of "Charlie's Angels" fame) plays Elliot's kid sister and ends up giving E.T. a peck on the face (oh, gross for some of you out there).

This is a good movie considering it was made five years before I was born. Yep friends, that would be two decades ago when your parents were probably still in school. Oh, you could ask them to tell you what happens next, that is, if they remembered. Hehe.

Better yet, just ask them to take you to see it. "E.T." will be opening at movie theaters here in the Philippines on April 3. Prepare to be amazed by the technology before you were born and be touched by the message of goodwill and friendship that it brings. Enjoy watching!

Oh, and just because I'm the one doing this movie review it doesn't make me E.T.'s official spokesperson and just in case you want to know. . .I am NOT E.T. nor do I have any relation with him. . .I think. . .(Mom, can you answer this?) Anyway. . .I will phone home. . .

Once again, have fun watching this film! Don't forget the popcorn!

¿ThinkathoN?
BY BONG BARRAMEDA

Cartoon Quotes

How well you remember your favorite cartoon characters is usually measured by how well you can recall his or her signature expression. Can you match each 'speaker' with the right quote?

____1.Tweety Pie
____2.Casper
____3.Bart Simpson
____4.Charlie Brown
____5.Yogi Bear
____6.Fred Flinstone
____7.Bugs Bunny
____8.Kenkoy
____9.Popeye
____10.Dick Dastardly
____11.Porky Pig
____12. Buzz Lightyear
____13.Snagglepuss
____14.Elmer Fudd
____15.Kermit T. Frog

A. "What's up, Doc?"
B. "I am what I am and that's all that I am"
C. "Good grief!"
D. "Nya-ah-ah!"
E. "Yabadabadoo!"
F. "To infinity and beyond!"
G. "I tawt I taw a puddy tat"
H. "Smarter than the average bear"
I. "Ah, caramba!"
J. "It's not easy being green"
K. "Be wery, wery quiet. I'm hunting wabbits!"
L. "Wetaminit, Rosing"
M. "Can you be my friend?"
N. "Exit stage left."
O. "That's all, folks!"

Answers :

1. G
2. M
3. I
4. C
5. H
6. E
7. A
8. L

9. B
10. D
11. O
12. F
13. N
14. K
15. J

Ratings :

superbrain! **11-2**

excellent! **8 - 10**

good! **5 - 9**

Destination: Space

(from page 2)

take control if needed, he said.

Worth it for Shuttle worth

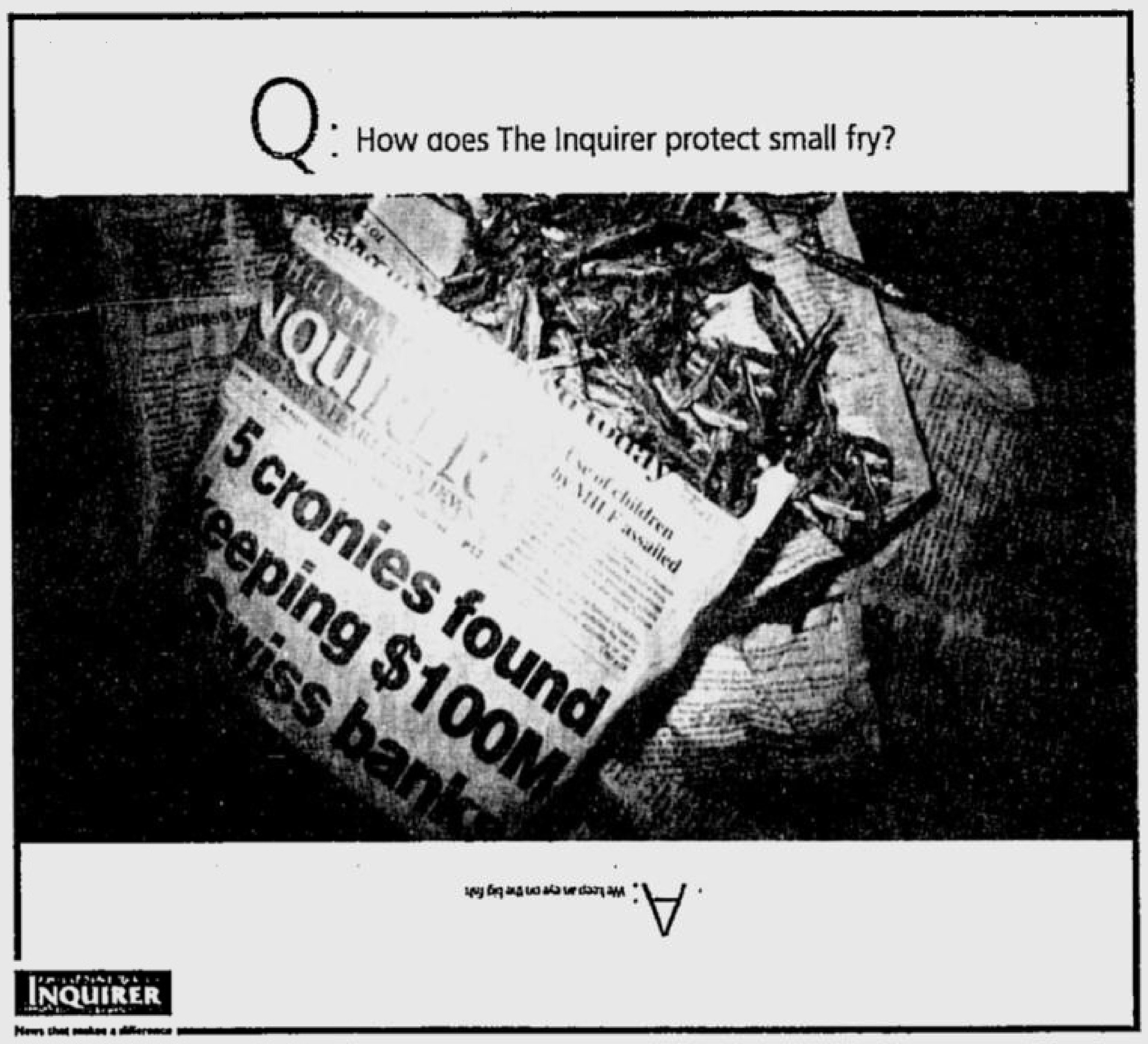
Suborbital Corporation chief Sergei Kostenko said it would cost $10 million to build and test the C-21. The full project—at a cost of $60 million—would include two M-55 carrier aircraft and seven suborbital ships and be able to run three flights a week, according to its planners.

Many companies in different countries have advertised plans for building a suborbital ship for space tourists, and U.S. Airways has offered clients a seat on the first suborbital spacecraft for 10,000,000 frequent flier miles. Novikov said his bureau's experience in designing Buran places it far ahead of others.

The next tourist to go into space, however, will follow Tito's footsteps. South African Internet tycoon Mark Shuttleworth, is scheduled to fly to the International Space Station in April.

AP

JOURNALISTS mill near a life-sized mock-up of S-XXI space ship, foreground, as M-55 carrier aircraft stands behind it at an air base in Zhukovsky, near Moscow. A 3-minute ride into space will cost a would-be space tourist $100,000. *AP*


Q: How does The Inquirer protect small fry?

A: We keep an eye on the big fish.

INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

RN82448

THE LUNCH BOX

by Katrina B. Villa

Meet Mr. Wegener...

Alfred Lothar Wegener was a German meteorologist who first theorised that the world's continents were once stuck together into a single land mass. Most people laughed at Mr. Wegener, but we now know that he was right.

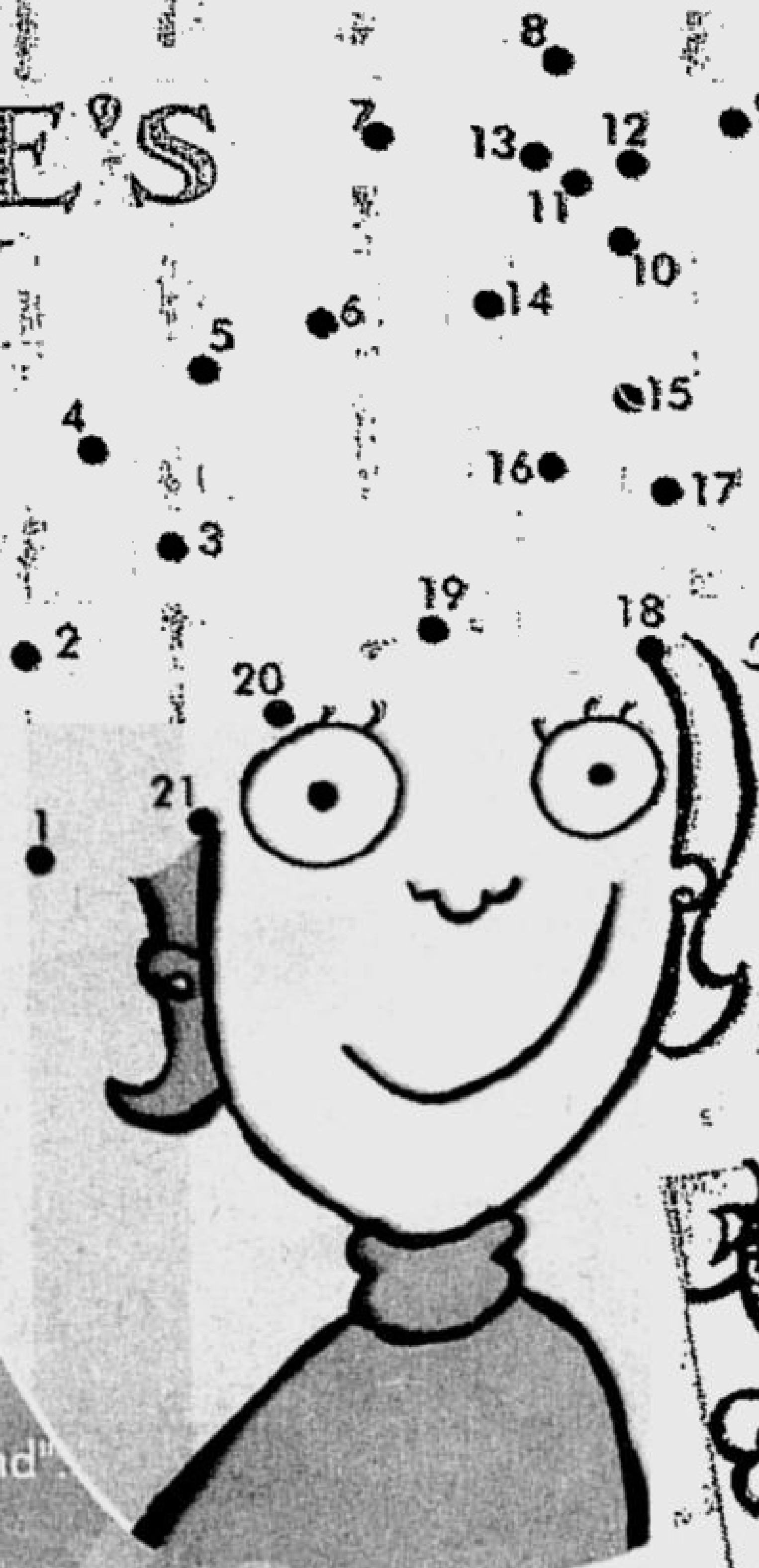
He gave a name to this single landmass, which in Greek means "all land". What is it?

☐ Pangaea
☐ Laurasia
☐ Botswana

answer: Pangaea

TINIE'S NEW HAT

connect the dots!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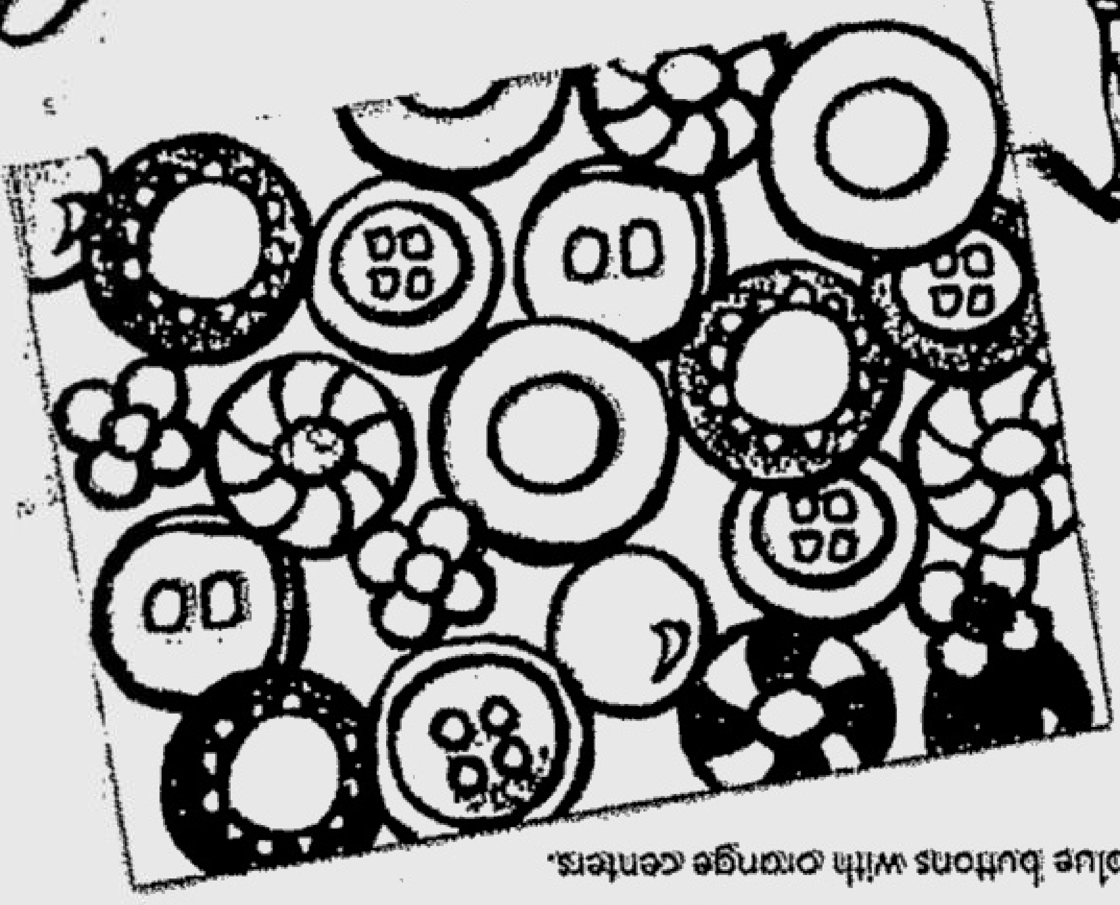
BUTTON UP!

Why do men's shirts button left side over right? There are many possible reasons. One is that it was easier for men to button up their clothes with their left hand while still holding onto a weapon with their right.

What? No Velcro?!

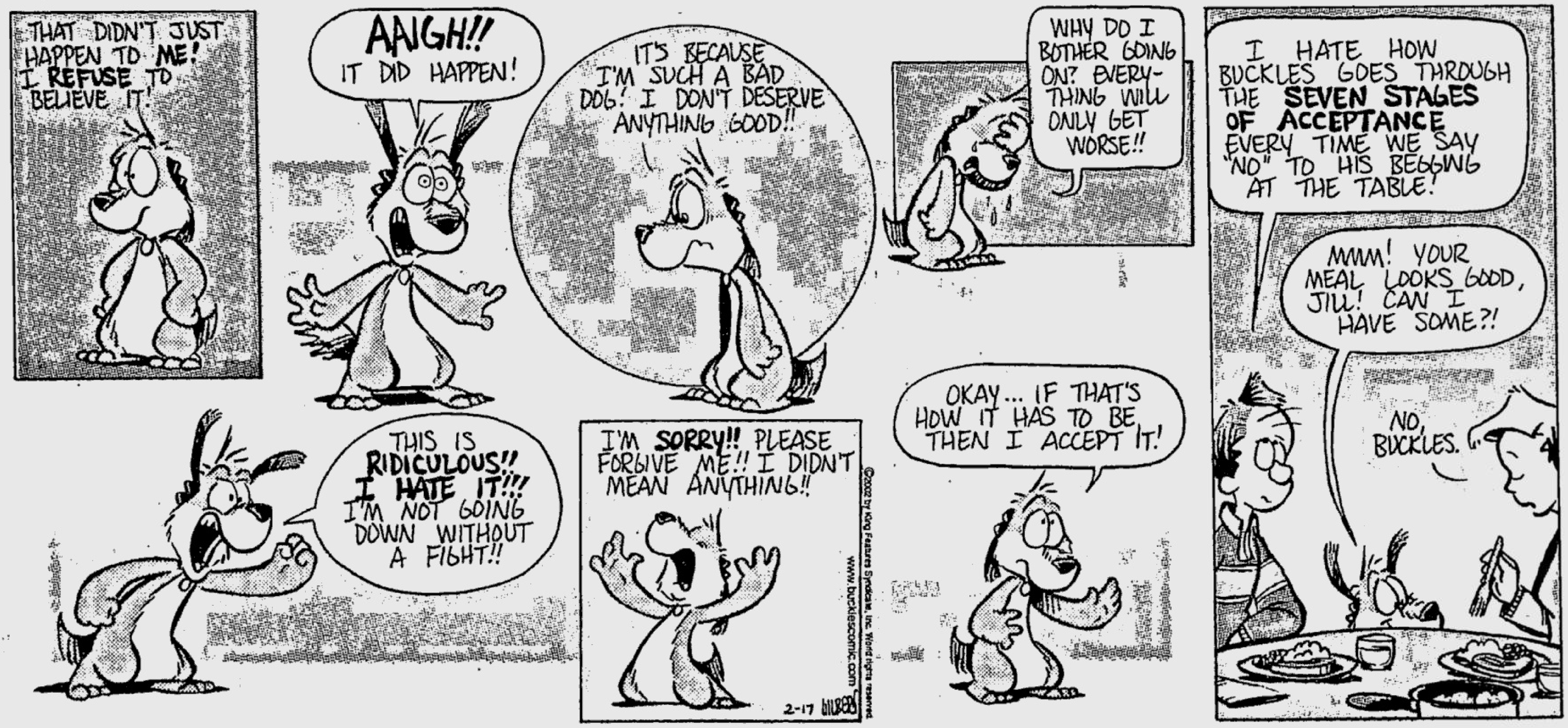
FIND THE TWO BUTTONS THAT ARE EXACTLY ALIKE!



Answer: The blue buttons with orange centers.

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


THAT DIDN'T JUST HAPPEN TO ME! I REFUSE TO BELIEVE IT!
AAIGH!! IT DID HAPPEN!
IT'S BECAUSE I'M SUCH A BAD DOG! I DON'T DESERVE ANYTHING GOOD!!
WHY DO I BOTHER GOING ON? EVERYTHING WILL ONLY GET WORSE!!
I HATE HOW BUCKLES GOES THROUGH THE SEVEN STAGES OF ACCEPTANCE EVERY TIME WE SAY "NO" TO HIS BEGGING AT THE TABLE!
MMM! YOUR MEAL LOOKS GOOD, JILL! CAN I HAVE SOME?!
NO, BUCKLES.
THIS IS RIDICULOUS!! I HATE IT!!! I'M NOT GOING DOWN WITHOUT A FIGHT!!
I'M SORRY!! PLEASE FORGIVE ME!! I DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING!!
OKAY... IF THAT'S HOW IT HAS TO BE, THEN I ACCEPT IT!
2-17 GILBERT

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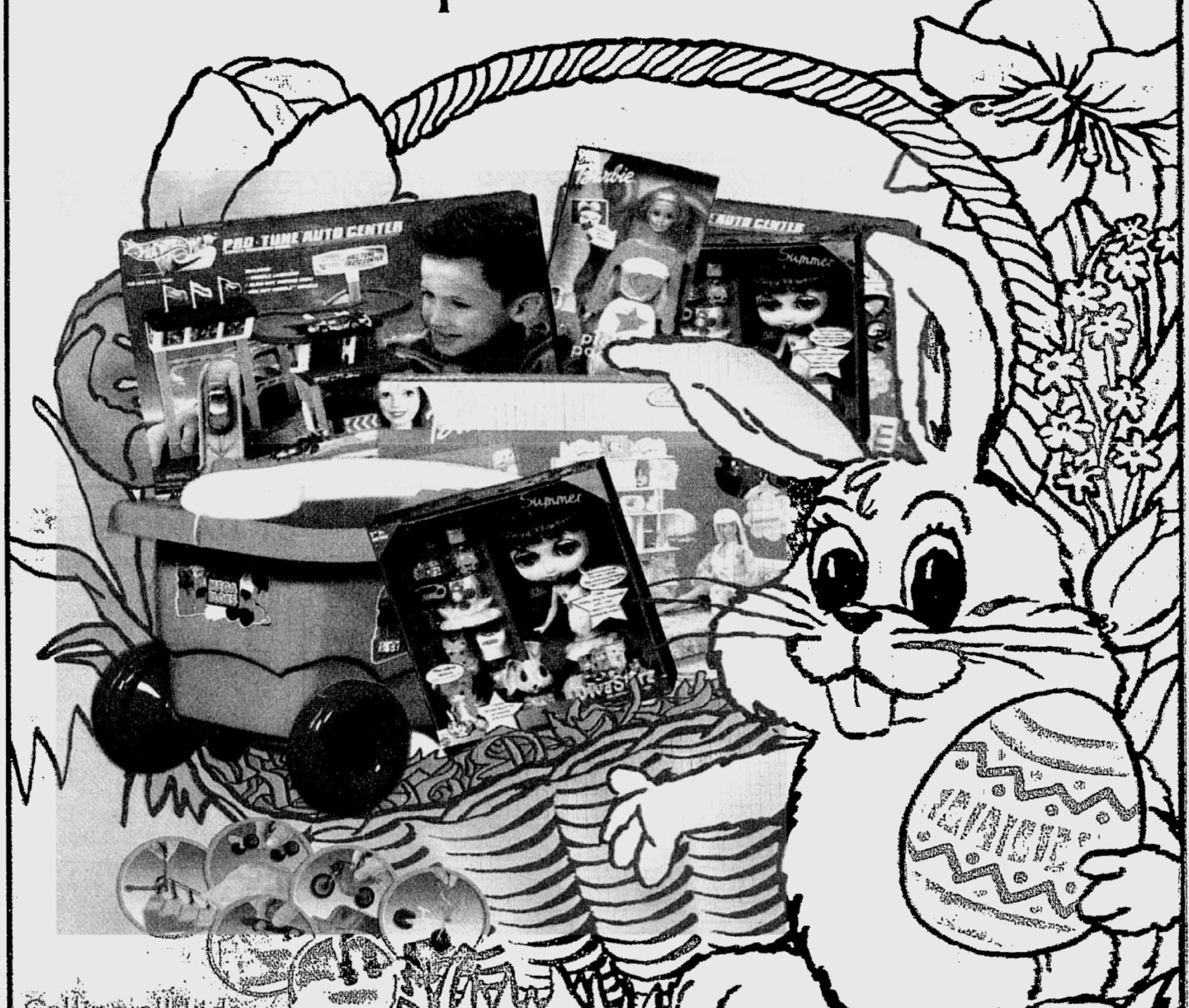
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Hey kids!

Join Junior Inquirer Easter Egg Hunt!

And get a chance to win a cool prize!



Calling all kids aged 5-12!

For the month of March, your mission is to find all the Easter eggs hidden in the pages of the Junior Inquirer issues on March 9, 16 and 23. Once you've collected 9 of the 12 eggs, answer them completely and correctly and put in an envelope with a piece of paper with your name, address, tel. no., signature and date of birth and mail them to us for a chance to win in our grand Easter raffle.

PROMO MECHANICS: EASTER EGG HUNT

1. The promotion is open to children 5 to 12 years old. For three (3) consecutive issues, March 9, 16 & 23, 2002, four (4) Easter eggs will be hidden in the pages of the Junior Inquirer.
2. Look for the eggs and accomplish the activity asked for in each egg and cut out.
3. Collect at least nine of the twelve eggs that will come out in the three (3) issues published within the promo duration (March 9, 16, 23) and with a piece of paper write your name, address, tel. no., affix your signature & date of birth, put these inside a white legal size envelope and mail to Easter Egg Hunt c/o Junior Inquirer, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.,1231 Makati City.
4. This serves as a single official entry to the raffle draw during which the following prizes shall be given away. Thirty five (35) winners will be drawn.

Major prizes:
Five (5) Oregon Scientific Accelerator PC trainer
Five (5) Maxi Wagon
Five (5) Diva Starz Summer dolls
Five (5) Picture Pockets Barbie dolls with all around time bedroom playset
Five (5) Hotwheels world playset
Minor prizes:
Ten (10) Burger King Kids Club Toy Sets

Only entries with the minimum number of nine eggs and with complete correct answers are considered valid.

5. Entries must be received by 5:00pm of April 1, 2002 to qualify for the raffle draw.
6. An individual may send more than one entry but can only win once in the raffle draw. However, if a name is drawn more than once, the winner gets the prize with the higher value.
7. The raffle draw will be held on April 6, 2002 at 3:00pm and will be held at the Philippine Daily Inquirer office at Chino Roces Ave. corner Yague & Mascardo Sts., Makati City in the presence of an official DTI representative.
8. Raffle prizes are not convertible to cash.
9. Raffle draw winners will be notified by phone and registered mail and their names will be announced via print ads.
10. Winners can claim their prizes at the PDI office upon presentation of the notification letter and a valid ID. (school ID or passport)
11. Raffle prizes not claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of PDI with prior approval from DTI.
12. Employees and staff of PDI, their advertising agency and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity and affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
13. Promo is valid only in GMA.

MEGA BLOKS
DivaStarz
Barbie
Hot Wheels
BURGER KING

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0820, Series of 2002